

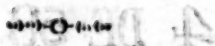
FREDERIC & CAROLINE,

OR THE

FITZMORRIS FAMILY.



A NOVEL.



LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

FREDERIC & CAROLINE



100, NEWINGTON GREEN, LONDON, N.E.

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OR THE

FITZMORRIS FAMILY.

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
REBECCA, JUDITH, MIRIAM, &c.

“ I wou'd not wrong
“ Virtue so try'd by the least shade of doubt :
“ Undue suspicion is more abject baseness,
“ Even than the guilt suspected.”

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FITZ MORRIS.



CHAP. I.

“And his last falt’ring accents whispered praise.”

ABOUT this time Mrs. Middleton resolved on giving a great route, and astonishing some of her city acquaintance “by doing quite the genteel thing.”—Caroline was employed by her to arrange ornaments for the occasion. It happened as she was one day attended by her to make some purchases preparatory to this grand entertainment, their carriage was overset by the coachman’s turning too short round a corner. The ladies were obliged to be taken out of one of the windows, and

conveyed into the nearest shop. Fortunately they were unhurt; and who should they find in it but Major Mortimer. He politely expressed his concern at the recent accident, and offered them the use of his carriage to convey them home, saying it was standing only two doors off. Mrs. Middleton, expressing her obligation to him, accepted his offer, and invited him to spend the day in Fleet Street.

“You are very good, Madam,” said he, bowing; “I shall be happy to attend you.”

He beckoned to his coachman to draw up, and immediately handed Mrs. Middleton in, and then turned to assist Caroline in the same way. Her foot was on the step of the coach, and she was on the point of raising her arm to lift herself in, when a gentleman in deep mourning attracted her attention.— She cast a casual glance on his countenance, and

and discovered, gracious Heavens! the features of her loved Frederic. He was standing by the side of the carriage, with his arms folded, in an attitude of extreme dejection; he instantly lifted his eyes to Heaven, and exclaimed—

“Can it be possible? Good God! can it be possible? Till I saw this, till I saw this, not the united tongues of thousands, not the whole world, not even her own unaccountable flight, could have induced me to believe Caroline Vincent false.”

Caroline now again raised her eyes to his face, but was unable to speak. Astonishment, fear, shame, anguish, all assailed her at once, and she in vain endeavoured to articulate.— Her agitation and emotion were both so great, as to prevent the possibility of her entering the coach without assistance. Major Mortimer, however, was perfectly composed,

and in an instant saw the necessity of preventing any conversation from passing between them; he made therefore an effort to lift her into the carriage, which Frederic perceiving, he caught hold of her arm, exclaiming—

“ Oh Caroline, Caroline ! once best beloved of my soul, reflect for a moment on the precipice on which you stand ; reflect on the probable event of the life you now lead ; feel only yourself the pity I feel for you, and return to those friends who will find comfort in your restoration to virtue ! ”

He might have continued for ages ; Caroline heard him not : she had sunk lifeless into the Major's arms, who had lifted her into the coach. It was some time ere she recovered her recollection ; and when she did, amazement took from her almost the power to think.

“ What

“What could Frederic mean by reproaching her with the want of virtue? It is true,” said she, mentally, “he might call me perfidious and ungrateful; he might call me false, for alas! he thinks me all these. His voice was the voice of indignation and reproach. Ah! how bitter and unmerited! it was not a voice which I have been accustomed to hear—it was the voice of anger, not of love; it was mournful, for he lamented my fall—and generous to the last, for he persuaded me to leave the paths of vice. Alas! how cruel is my destiny! why cannot I fly to him, and, in the repository of his faithful bosom, place an entire confidence?”

She started at the recollection of the promise she had given her mother, that never till after her death her history should be revealed; and she found she had no resource

but patience. In the solitude of her own chamber the violent agitation of her mind gradually subsided, and she now had first time to recollect that Frederic was dressed in deep mourning.

“Then,” cried she, “the good, the worthy Mr. Godfrey is no more!” and she indulged the sorrow of her heart in lamenting this new source of affliction.—At her next meeting with Mrs. Middleton, Caroline informed her of her acquaintance and connection with young Godfrey, from its beginning to its unfortunate termination, only concealing the history of her mother’s conduct, which she said was the only circumstance which she was not at liberty to reveal.

“My dear Miss Vincent,” replied Mrs. Middleton, “I beg you will not trouble yourself to convince me; I am already satisfied.

I knew

I knew well enough that a young person of your gentility could not be what he said.—Come, dress yourself; we will all go to the Play to-night—it will do you good.”

Caroline would gladly have excused herself from attending, yet she did not refuse, conscious of the kind motive which occasioned the proposal; and ever anxious to promote the pleasure of others, she was more easy at going, as she knew it would delight her pupil, and that she would not be permitted to go unaccompanied by herself. Major Mortimer, having accepted Mrs. Middleton's invitation, was consequently of the party, to the no small mortification of our heroine, who had now added to the dislike she had always felt for him, a dread of again encountering Frederic in his company, as she had some vague idea that he was jealous of the Major, and

B 4

doubted

doubted not but her being seen with him was a confirmation of her lover's fears ; yet if so, what meant his accusations, his heart-wounding accusations, with regard to her honour ?

Caroline smiled at her own weakness in imagining that she should twice in one day accidentally meet a person it was so unlikely she should ever again behold ; yet she was continually looking from the coach window, and examining the countenances of the passengers, wishing, yet dreading, once more to see him on whom her whole heart was fondly fixed. After she was seated in the Theatre, the same anxiety betrayed itself in every motion. Her hopes, however, gradually subsided into disappointment ; no Frederic appeared. The performance was that admirable picture of life, " The Gamester ;" and, in compassion for Mrs. Beverly,

Beverly, she soon lost the recollection of her own sorrows, and wept, unconscious of the many eyes that were upon her, till Gertrude Middleton pinched her by the arm, whispering at the same time—

“ Only look at that handsome man yonder; he has kept his glass fixed on us ever since his entrance; he is certainly in love with one of us. Look, he is in the second box from the stage.”

Caroline looked where Gertrude pointed, and beheld Frederic Godfrey leaning against one of the pillars; he rested his head on his hand, and appeared totally absorbed in his own reflections. She had now time to observe the alteration in his countenance; he was much thinner, very pale, and wore an air of the deepest melancholy. She thought she had never beheld him so interesting; indeed he never had been so to her,

her, for she could not but place some of his dejection to her own account. Major Mortimer, the entertainment, the company, all were forgotten in this one object; she beheld only the Frederic she had loved, that she still loved, miserable; and made so by her.

“Alas!” thought she, “what a strange contrariety do I feel between affection and duty! I that would die to render him happy—I who delight to dwell on his image, who feel most sensibly his goodness, his virtue, his generosity, who have been fortunate enough to attract his regard—even I am the person who is compelled to desert, and make him wretched.”

Tears streamed down her cheeks, which she was unable to restrain; and she in vain endeavoured to banish recollection. Towards the conclusion of the entertainment,
many

many persons behind Mrs. Middleton's party left the Theatre. Caroline heard some one enter the box, and turning her head, found it was the object on whom all her thoughts were centered. She was now so agitated, that she had scarcely the power to breathe. She was convinced that Frederic wished to speak to her, and taken off her guard, she could not remember what she had wished to say to him : yet she had longed for such an opportunity—longed to endeavour to convince him of her innocence."

"But alas!" thought she, "it will be useless; I cannot betray my mother; and without an entire and circumstantial account, how can he be reconciled to me? My tale will appear false; he will perhaps imagine I have framed a story purposely to deceive him."

In a few minutes Frederic approached her, and, at the conclusion of the piece, he offered her his hand to lead her to the carriage, Major Mortimer having before taken charge of Mrs. Middleton and Gertrude.—Caroline, in whose breast love had entirely banished every angry thought, accepted his proffered arm.

“Miss Vincent,” said he, “this is the second time I behold you with Major Mortimer. Is it then true that you left Wales with him?”

Caroline could not answer.—He proceeded.—“If I might hope to be heard as a friend, for in any other light, alas! I—I cannot—I can never—I would caution—I would warn you—I would advise you to seek some less precarious mode of subsistence.”

“Mr. Godfrey,” replied Caroline, indignation crimsoning her whole frame, “I am obliged

obliged to you for your advice, but at present it is unnecessary ;—my situation is not, I flatter myself, at all precarious ; it is, I hope, as permanent as I can wish, and it will not subject me to unmerited insult.”

“ Would to God !” cried Frederic, clasping his hands together in a fervent and energetic manner, “ would to God that it was an honourable, a virtuous situation ! Would to God that I now beheld you free from reproach and dishonour ! Would to God that I dared to believe you innocent !”

“ Mr. Godfrey,” replied Caroline, angrily withdrawing her hand, which he had taken, “ I hope one day or other to convince you that you injure me ; till then I am silent.”

Major Mortimer, who stood by the step of the carriage, now handed her in, and Frederic followed the coach, determined to

see where it conveyed her ; and having beheld her set down in Fleet-Street, he returned to his lodgings, Caroline's conduct still appearing to him as inexplicable as ever.

It is now time to inform my readers of the occurrences in Frederic's family since we left them. On the morning appointed for the celebration of the nuptials, Frederic hastened, with the ardour of a lover, to the object of his affections, about to become his for ever. During the short ride from St. Donats, his emotions and feelings were impetuous and sanguine ; his happiness promised to be too great for frail humanity to bear ; every moment seemed to be an hour ; and several times he had nearly leaped from the carriage, thinking he could be more speedy on foot. Judge then his disappointment when the only female servant Mrs. Vincent kept, informed him that the ladies had

had set out at day-break for Bristol. It was not only astonishment and surprise, it was the anguish of disappointed affection—it was the agony of despair which took possession of his senses. He had gradually been mounted on the summit of earthly happiness, only to be plunged yet deeper in the gulph of human misery. For some moments he spoke not, but his silence was more expressive than words. At length the grief, which had been confined in his labouring bosom, found vent, and he exclaimed—

“Tell me, for God’s sake tell me where is she gone? And why has she left me at this momentous period?”

“I am sure I don’t know nothing at all about it,” said the girl; “but yesterday they were in a strange combusticle, and they went off at night. I can’t tell, I’m sure, what hurry they were in; but sartain they did

did hurry perdigious ; and they never told me nothing at all about it till the very minute they went away. Oh Lord, Sir," continued she, seeing the effect her story had on her hearer, " I wouldn't for the world vex so kind-hearted a gentleman as you ; but if I might speak my mind, I think they be gone to join Major Mortimer ; he went but yesterday that ever was ; he has a heap of money, and has long been courting Miss."

" Damnation !" exclaimed Frederic ; " it is impossible !"

" Lord, Sir," said the girl, " don't frighten yourself ! I'm sure I wonder how she could leave such a sweet, handsome young man as you for that old fudge."

" What reason have you to think she joined the Major ?" said Frederic.

" Servants

“ Servants shouldn’t tell tales of their betters, Sir ; but they have eyes as well as gentlefolks ; and I’m sure I wonder how she could be so false-hearted to you.”

“ Well but, good Mary, tell me, do you certainly know that she is gone to the Major ?”

“ Why, Sir, you know I can’t be fartin ; I never seed them meet, and they never told me they was going to him, but I think they was.”

“ But,” asked Frederic, more and more agitated, “ what reason have you to think they went to Bristol ?”

“ Why, they went, Sir, in the coach.”

“ And they promised to meet Major Mortimer there ?” said Frederic.

“ Why, Sir, I can’t say I did hear ’em, so I can’t swear it ; but I think they has promised to meet him.”

Frederic

Frederic found he could get no certain information from Mary, and therefore resolved to endeavour, by tracing the road they took, to discover the motive of this strange journey. Mary, however, was better informed than she pretended to be; she was an adept in the art of listening; and having been promised a handsome gratuity by Major Mortimer, she let no opportunity pass which was favourable for its practice.— She had found out that her mistress purposed to break off the intended alliance between her daughter and Mr. Godfrey, but she remained entirely ignorant of her motives for so doing; and also that she meant to go to Bristol: and with this information she had hastened to the Major, who liberally presented her with five shillings, and promised her as many more if she would evade the enquiries of the deserted lover as he should

should instruct her, which Mary did very adroitly, as has been before related. Major Mortimer had, through life, hesitated at nothing which he imagined could promote his pleasures; and, in his numerous intrigues, he had always found servants useful, although dangerous auxiliaries. He scarcely reached London before he called his man John to his aid.

“John,” said he, “do you know any thing of the family in which Miss Vincent resides?”

“Why, your Honour,” said John, “I know one of the girls; she is a country-woman of mine; we be both from Somersetshire.”

“What sort of a girl is she?” said the Major.

“Why, your Honour,” replied John, scratching his head, and looking very foolish,

“Mrs.

“ Mrs. Jenny is a pretty, neat, clever young woman—and—and,” continued he, hesitating, “ I was thinking, your Honour—I was going to mention to your Honour——”

“ Why, John,” said the Major, “ you seem to have a fancy to Mrs. Jenny.”

“ Why, your Honour, service is no inheritance; it is time for me to think of settling—but—but—I hope your Honour has no designs on Mrs. Jenny?”

“ John,” said Major Mortimer, “ if you intend to marry the girl, I will do something handsome for you both, if you can persuade her to come into my plan, which is only to inform me of every thing which happens in Middleton’s family; and you must bring Mrs. Jenny to my lodgings, John.”

“ Ah! your Honour,” shaking his head, “ I dare not bring her here; there is no trusting

trusting your Honour when a girl is in the case."

It will rather surprise the reader that the Major only smiled at this remark, and then replied—

"But you may trust me, John—your Jenny is safe. I only want her to assist me in my plans with regard to Miss Vincent; and a little money would do you no harm when you come together."

"Why, to be sure, your Honour," said John, rather doubtfully, "that would be a fine help for us: and when would your Honour like to speak with her?"

"Whenever you can bring her here without risk."

The conversation now ended, and John retired to meditate on the promised fortune, and still rather afraid of trusting Mrs. Jenny to his Honour."

Frederic

Frederic travelled all night, and rested not until he was safely set down at the Bush-Inn, in the city of Bristol. He there found, by referring to the book-keeper, that Mrs. Vincent and her daughter had set off immediately for London, accompanied by Major Mortimer.

“Here then,” thought he, “is full conviction; yet that I may have nothing to reproach myself with hereafter, I will still pursue her, and will convince her that she no longer triumphs over my affections, and, on finding her unworthy of my regard, that I can cast her off for ever.”

Yet he still indulged a latent hope that he was deceived; he still flattered himself he was so; “for,” cried he, “she appeared innocent and virtuous. Oh Caroline, Caroline! would to God that I had died in ignorance of thy falsehood! Would to God that I had ceased to be ere this fatal day!”

It

It was his intention to write a line, to inform his friends of this sad reverse in his prospects, while the horses were putting to, as they had expected to have received him, accompanied by his bride, that very night ; but at the door of the coffee-room he met Dr. L———, who attended his father.

“ Young man,” said the Doctor, “ I am sorry to see you here on so melancholy an occasion.”

Frederic started ; he was astonished at what the Doctor could mean ; it was impossible for him to have heard of Caroline’s elopement.

“ I hope,” continued the Doctor, “ Mr. Godfrey may yet do well ; but I fear——”

“ Merciful Heaven !” cried Frederic, interrupting him, and lifting up his hands and eyes, “ merciful Heaven, tell me, Doctor, tell me, I entreat you, what is the matter with him ?”

“ My

“ My good young man, I am sorry thus suddenly to have alarmed you ; but you must have been informed of it sooner or later. Your father is worse, much worse ; I fear he cannot live many days.”

Frederic leaned against the wall, and groaned aloud ; he was for some time unable to speak. At length he exclaimed—

“ And is it thus we are to meet—we who expected to rejoice in bridal festivity—we whom yesterday’s sun saw the happiest of the happy—it is too, too much !”

“ My dear young friend,” said the Doctor, “ reflect on the mischief you will cause, if you needlessly alarm your father : reflect, and endeavour to compose your agitation, and hasten to your friends, and be their consolation. You are blessed with an excellent understanding and a worthy heart ; call the one to the aid and support
of

of the other; and since the loss of your father is inevitable, endeavour to bear it with fortitude and resignation. The sorrow we experience for the loss of our friends is selfish and unavailing, for they are placed beyond the reach of human misfortune; and although we may regret the loss of their society, yet we ought rather to rejoice that they have quitted a state of trial for a haven of rest."

"It is but too true," replied Frederic, sighing.—"The world is indeed a state of trial, and I will endeavour to follow your advice; I will study to bear my misfortunes with submission: but it is a hard task to silence the emotions of the heart, and it is one which but yesterday I had no occasion to practise."

During the short ride to the Wells, he reasoned himself into some degree of composure, and had resolution enough to

determine to conceal from his father the change in his situation. He found the whole family in the deepest affliction. Poor Emma had many sources of sorrow ; yet she endeavoured to support her spirits, and strive to convince her father that his illness alone caused her uneasiness. She had received only one letter from her husband since his departure, and her mind was a prey to the most alarming apprehensions ; yet she never expressed her anxiety, and her cheerfulness was unabated. If her father at any time made a remark on the extraordinary conduct of her husband, she endeavoured to account for it by stating the situation of the country he inhabited, and the difficulty he must be under to get a safe conveyance for his letters.

On the first arrival of Frederic, Mr. Godfrey was asleep, and he had time to inform his sister that Dr. L—— had written to him,

him, and that his return was in consequence of that letter.

“ Oh my dear brother !” said Emma, “ we shall certainly lose him ; we shall lose the tenderest, the best of fathers. In his calm and tranquil mind you will behold the serenity, the peace with which a good conscience meets the bed of sickness—alas ! I fear the bed of death. We shall never more behold him rise from it ; he will never again, with his cheerful converse, gladden our evening hours ; yet, my brother, still anxious for the good of others, he employs all his waking moments in salutary advice to those around him.”

The bell of Mr. Godfrey’s apartment now rung, and Emma hastened to prepare her father for the arrival of his son.

“ My dear father,” said she, as she entered, “ Frederic will now soon be here ;—

for I find Dr. L—— has informed him of your illness."

"I am sorry for that, my love," replied he, "as it will prevent the conclusion of his wishes, perhaps even his nuptials, from taking place. You will want a companion of your own sex and age, my love, and I had hoped at least to have witnessed the felicity of one of my children"

"Oh my father!" cried Emma, knowing he alluded to Edwin's seeming neglect of her, "be but well, and your Emma is happy. She has the most secure, the most unbounded confidence in the affection of her Edwin: she feels no fear but for his safety, no anxiety but for his life; and that he lived a short time since, we have the most convincing proofs."

"My child," said Mr. Godfrey, "I now speak to you for the last time on this subject.

Should

Should you not, on the return of your husband, find yourself as happy as you could hope to be—should the long separation you will probably experience, weaken his attachment to you, rely on the affection of your uncle ; in all your difficulties take his advice ; he has seen more of life, he knows more of the human heart than your brother ; he has experienced the waywardness of feeling, and with him the headstrong passions of youth have subsided. On the contrary, Frederic and your husband are both young, both ardent in their tempers, both violent in their passions, and their anger is easily excited. Should any dispute arise between them, the most fatal consequences might ensue ; yet at the same time, my love, remember, it is your duty, by every means in your power, to conciliate the affections of Mr. Edwin, and, if possible, even to bear unkindness. Reflect

that, however flagrant may be the cause which separates a husband from his wife, yet they never part without a stigma being attached to both, and the woman has generally the greatest share of contumely to support.— Her situation, when away from the protection of her husband, lays her open to the observations and slander of the multitude. Her most innocent actions are misrepresented, and she rarely passes through life with an unblemished reputation. But I think, my love,” continued he, “ I hear the voice of your brother ; send him to me.”

Frederic started back on perceiving the alteration a short time had made on his father's countenance.

“ Oh my father, my dear father !” exclaimed he, “ why was I kept in ignorance of your state of health—why did you not
suffer

suffer me to be informed, ere this, that you were worse?"

"My son," said Mr. Godfrey, tenderly embracing him, "my decline has been rapid indeed; but I thank God, I hope I am not unprepared. I should have sent for you, my dear boy, but that I expected to see you, and clasp in my arms the daughter of my wishes, your beloved Caroline; I hoped to behold her united to you ere I died, but it must not be—God's will be done!"

Frederic could with difficulty conceal his emotion at this mention of Caroline.

"Alas!" thought he, "the sun will never more rise to witness my felicity—that is set in endless night—Caroline and I shall meet no more!"

Mr. Godfrey then detailed clearly and explicitly some domestic business, and afterwards complaining of heaviness, Frederic

left him ; and having seen him composed, sat down to indulge melancholy reflection.

Although this blow had long been expected by Emma, and though she was not unprepared for it, yet she with difficulty prevented her tears from flowing even in the presence of her father : when at liberty, she indulged her sorrowing heart. Shadows of the past fled in succession before her ; she recollected every instance of paternal affection, soon to be experienced no more.— She reflected on his numerous virtues, and sighed to think that, after the transition of a few, a very few years, the remembrance of them would be consigned to oblivion, when she should perhaps have followed him to the tomb, and all that promised happiness in the morning of her life should be blasted ere it arrived to maturity ; and she should consider the peaceful grave

as the only secure asylum which Providence has bestowed on his creatures.—A cold chill came over her when she reflected that a few hours would perhaps for ever deprive her of a parent, when his remains would be conveyed to the damp bosom of the earth, when he would be alike insensible to joy or grief, and when the tears of inconsolable affection would be unheard, and totally unavailing. Twenty years had Emma experienced the fond partiality of her father—twenty years had passed, and had seen them always together; yet now a separation was inevitable and eternal, unless permitted to recognize each other in a future state.

A loud groan from her father's chamber hastened Emma to his bed-side; she rung the bell violently. Who can describe her feelings? She found him in the agonies of death. Mrs. Dixon, Mr. Fitzmorris, and

Frederic rushed into the apartment, but it was too late ; the struggle was over, and the vital spark, which once animated the frame of Mr. Godfrey, was fled for ever !

“ My dear Emma,” said Fitzmorris, “ you are unfit for a scene like this. Your gentle spirit will be unable to support the terrors of this chamber ; suffer me to lead you to your own room.”

He took her passive hand, and conducted her, almost unconsciously, from a place where she had experienced the greatest misfortune of her life. When her mind recovered its recollection, the past appeared like a dream. She could scarcely credit her senses.

“ And was she really an orphan ? Yes, an orphan and a wife—a widowed wife !—she was alone in the grand scale of existence !

“ No,

“No, God forbid!” cried she; “Edwin still loves me, Frederic loves me, but my father, my dear father, has left me for ever!”

Frederic was deeply absorbed in affliction; he could not help reflecting on himself for quitting his sick parent, in pursuit of Caroline.

“And yet,” exclaimed he, “I left him on the recovery—I left him but a few short weeks; on my return I see him a breathless corpse. Oh my father, my father! every day robs us of some valued friend, every hour life appears less attractive,—happy is he, who, like you, my parent, can meet death with resignation and hope!”

Fitzmorris undertook the performance of the last offices towards his lamented relative; and five days after his decease he was interred in the College Church of Bristol.—The family immediately removed to Bath,

in hopes that change of scene might restore the drooping spirits of Emma. Her melancholy was now extreme; the effort she had made to hide her unhappiness from her father, was no longer necessary; her father was no more, and she sunk at once into a state of languid depression. Frederic soon left his friends at Bath, and pursued his way to London, determined to discover the retreat of Caroline and her mother, and resolved to demand from them an explanation of their conduct.

Mr. Fitzmorris was as much surprised as his nephew at Miss Vincent's extraordinary disappearance:—"For," said he, "had Caroline entertained a preference for Major Mortimer, she had liberty to chuse between you; and I can hardly think it probable that she would condescend to be the illicit companion of a man whose honourable addresses she refused."

Only

Only a few days after his arrival in London, Frederic discovered Caroline, as has been before related ; and when he had obtained knowledge of her residence, he determined to seek an early opportunity of seeing her. Appearances were certainly against her, yet he thought there was something in her countenance which bespoke her innocent ; and wishing to find her virtuous, he almost persuaded himself that she was so.

Major Mortimer, immediately after the second interview with Frederic, dispatched Mr. John to bring the girl he had mentioned to him, as he thought it high time to settle some plan to prevent Frederic from gaining an explanation from Caroline, as he feared one conversation between them would entirely frustrate all his well-concerted plans.

John had no sooner ushered his love into the presence of the Major, than he began to
found

found the girl; and soon discovering vanity to be her reigning foible, he determined to work on it, and make her his grand engine in the business. Mr. John having retired—

“Bless me, Mrs. Jenny,” said his master, “you are divinely handsome!”

The poor girl blushed.

“You appear,” continued he, “to have a good place at Mr. Middleton’s.”

“Oh Lord, Sir, no one can have a better; my master and mistress are both very good-tempered; and as for Miss Vincent, she’s beyond all. I’m sure, Sir, I shall never, as long as I live, forget what she said to my mistress to-day; for you must know, Sir, my mistress means to give a grand route, I think they call it. Now Joseph, our footman, is ill; so mistress was a saying to Miss Vincent, says she, ‘What shall we do if Joseph does not get well?’”

“Why,”

‘Why,’ says Miss Vincent, says she, ‘there’s the coachman and the boy, and besides a smart, tidy girl; and I dare say she will be able to wait as well as the rest.’

“Oh Lord, I verily thought I should have died in the place.

‘Jenny,’ says Miss Vincent again, ‘is a neat, pretty, tidy girl.’—Well, ’twas very good of Miss Vincent, I’m sure; I shall never forget it.”

“I declare, Mrs. Jenny,” said the Major, “I am surprised to hear you undervalue yourself in this manner. I am sure, if Miss Vincent had said you were beautiful, she would not have done you justice.”

“Oh Lord, your Honour,” simpering and blushing, “now I’m sure your Honour is joking.”

“’Pon honour I am serious; I think you very pretty indeed; and you are pretty; you know you are.”

It

“ It does not become me to contradict your Honour,” said Mrs. Jenny, dropping a low curtsy.—“ But as I was a saying, Miss Vincent, she said, ‘ There’s Jenny is a pretty, neat, tidy girl ; she shall try to wait.’—So, your Honour, I tended tea that blessed night, and I declare, as I’m a living sinner, I thought before ’twas a great thing to do ; but ’tis only hand it to ’em—they take it themselves. Well mistress, she turned me out in a new suit, and I declare, when I looked in the glass, I could scarce help thinking of Miss Vincent.—‘ There’s Jenny,’ says she, ‘ is a pretty, neat, tidy girl,’ says she ; and Miss Vincent says, ‘ ’Tis all to be done, like some lady ;’ but ’twas not Lady-Day, and I never heard of no other. Oh how I likes Lady-Day, for all I don’t know her ; for when she comes to town, ’tis quarter-day, and then mistress pays me my wages..

wages. Poor Miss Vincent isn't well to do, your Honour, as I may be bold to say to you; she's only a serving maid, as well as myself."

"Well, Mrs. Jenny," said the Major, "I am what the world calls a warm man, and I mean to reward the services of my man John; and I will make both your's and Miss Vincent's fortune if you will do what I tell you. There is only one thing in the way, and that is, Miss Vincent is in love with a profligate young fellow:—now I only wish that if he comes to your house, you will not let him see her; and if you cannot help that, take this letter to him as he goes out, and that will do his business."

"I will be sure to do as your Honour bids me. Out upon Miss Vincent, to love a profligate young man!"

"Tere's

“There’s a guinea,” said the Major;—
“and when you have done the business, I will
be obliged to you if you will come and tell
me.”

Jenny promised, and returned to Fleet
Street, well pleased with her visit.

CHAP. II.

“The toiling pleasure sickens into pain.”

MRS. MIDDLETON had (as her maid
Jenny told the Major) really fixed the day
for her route; and being determined it
should be “quite the genteel thing,” no
expence was spared. Caroline was employed
to

to dispose of the ornaments in the three rooms, which were to be opened, and Mrs. Middleton was all hurry and agitation:—her “weak nerves” were quite forgotten;—she assiduously employed herself in nailing up the coloured lamps, and wiping the China, glass, &c. After every thing was put in order, she exclaimed rapturously—

“Well, I declare it’s the most fashionablest thing I ever saw. Mrs. Alderman Double-sack will be quite frightened, don’t you think so? Bless me, we have forgot to make some *buchets*, as well as wreaths, of the *hartificial* flowers.”

An hundred cards had been sent out, and no answers were returned until the day preceding the “great, the important day,” when, to Mrs. Middleton’s great mortification, she received more than fifty refusals.—Every rap at the door—

“Oh

“ Oh God !” cried Mrs. Middleton, “ another humility knock—we shall have nobody here !”

“ I think, Madam,” said Caroline, “ fifty people will be quite enough ; the servants will be able to wait without Jenny’s assistance.”

“ Very true,” said the good-natured woman, “ you are always right ; I should like to have every thing go off well, and in style.—There, there,” cried she, almost jumping from her chair, “ there’s a gentility rap—Jenny, Betty, Molly, say we are not at home. I shouldn’t at all like to be caught in my bed-gown, and I dare say ’tis my dear friend, Mrs. Alderman Double-sack ; she’s the most provokingest thing in the world ; she always comes when I am *dish a bill*.”

Jenny

Jenny now entered, and informed the ladies that it was the milliner who had brought home their things.

“Well, well, let us see,” said her mistress;—“bring them up; I am so glad!”

Many fashionable articles were now produced, and approved of; but Caroline was sorry to find that the lady of the mansion had fixed on a yellow and lilac turban.—Caroline and Gertrude chose their own dresses—plain white muslins, which set off the symmetry of their forms; no ornaments were here displayed, no variety of colours exhibited. Their head-dresses consisted only of their hair, Nature’s own gift, elegantly turned in the Grecian style. Mrs. Middleton’s gown was a lilac satin, trimmed with green fringe.—The grand day was ushered in with some hurry, and no small portion of confusion. Every thing was,
however,

however, arranged ; and the ladies, having arrayed themselves, waited to receive the company, who, about seven o'clock, began to enter, to the no small gratification of Mrs. Middleton.

“ I declare, my dear friend,” said Mrs. Alderman Doublesack, who was one of the first who entered, “ I never in my life saw any thing so pretty and tasty as your rooms !”

“ I am very glad you like them,” said Mrs. Middleton ; “ a person of your taste and feeling, who knows what’s what——”

Company now crowded in so fast, that she had not time to conclude her speech ; both Caroline and Gertrude assisted her in placing the company.

“ Pray, Miss,” said an old lady to the former, “ don’t you play ?”

“ No, Madam, I never take a card in my and.”

“ Well,”

“ Well,” continued the lady, “ that is to me amazing ! I am never so happy as when sitting at a card-table ; but I always contrive to get out before the refreshments come, for otherwise one has no time to taste them, and I like a glass of wine ;—but then it’s in moderation ; but I am sure,” eying our heroine sarcastically, “ if I did not play cards, I would never come into company—you must be so stupid.”

Caroline smiled, and allowed that she must appear so to her.

“ Why, to be sure, Miss, you are but poor entertainment ; for what signifies people’s looks, if they are fit for nothing ?”

Caroline answered not this polite remark, but could not help observing that this lady’s moderation extended itself to eight glasses of wine, and as many pieces of cake. Her attention was called off from Mrs.

Melton

Melon by a dispute between two ladies concerning the score. One asserted that the other had marked two more than she had a right to set up. Indignation flashed into the eyes of the accused lady, and she exclaimed—

“Miss Jones, you have insulted me, and by God I’ll never play another card with you as long as I live.”

“Miss Spruce retorted by flinging the cards at the head of her adversary. The whole room was in confusion; every one crowded to the scene of action, yet fearing to approach too near, conceiving they might receive some of the blows which were likely to be dealt. Lord Newmarket and Mr. Battleman now insisted on forming a ring, and seeing fair play.

“Come, Miss Jones,” cried the latter, “strip, and I’ll pit you against your antagonist

antagonist for a thousand guineas. I see, by your countenance, you are a good pugilist."

"Done," said his Lordship.—"Come, my fair Amazon, Miss Spruce, fight!"

Both ladies were now exasperated beyond all patience, and flying with fury on both the gentlemen, who made them the subjects of their ridicule, they obliged them to make a precipitate retreat into the next apartment, and then returned to the war of words, which raged with redoubled violence, and then had recourse to blows, till caps, handkerchiefs, and aprons strewed the floor, and they were obliged to retire, lest the surrounding spectators should take them for that religious sect, so common in North Wales, denominated Jumpers; for although these fair and gentle daughters of our great mother had not, at the beginning of the

affray, disencumbered themselves from any part of their wearing apparel, yet at its termination they were literally stripped, and it was generally feared, by the humane part of the assembly, that they would suffer severely in their return home from the severity of the weather, which, in their present undisguised situation, they would no doubt feel intensely cold. After their departure, it is natural to suppose that the conversation unavoidably fell on their extraordinary conduct; every one made different remarks, not very much to the advantage of the fair combatants. Poor Mrs. Middleton bitterly lamented that such an ungentleel thing should have happened in her house.

“Oh Lord, Madam,” said Lord Newmarket, “my friend Battleman can assure you, as well as myself, that it is quite the ‘gentleel thing.’”

Nothing

Nothing can be too *outré* for the ladies of the present day—any thing to attract attention; we have whole boarding-schools of rope-dancers, and I do not despair of seeing, at some future period, a theatre erected for the female pugilists of Great-Britain to exercise their talents in. For my part, I admire all sublime efforts of genius, and shall be happy at any time to become a liberal subscriber to so useful an institution.”

It appeared as if Fortune had determined to make Mrs. Middleton's route the subject of universal conversation, and that she should gain *eclat*, although perhaps not in the exact manner she wished. Mrs. Alderman Caxon had sported on this occasion a new peruke complete in all its compartments.—She determined carefully to conceal this new acquisition *de la tête*; and now first leaving

off that unfashionable thing called powder, in future to dress entirely "*A la Grecque*."

Mr. Middleton, although in the main a good-natured man, loved nothing so well as a joke (except indeed his wife and daughter), and particularly a joke on the wife of his friend the Alderman, although it unfortunately happened that these jokes generally produced a *fracas* between the lady and himself. He immediately observed the alteration in her appearance, and was for some time at a loss to account for it;—but recollecting that, had Mrs. Caxon worn her own hair, it must, in the course of things, by this time have had a tendency to grey, it occurred immediately to him that she had called in art to supply the deficiency of nature, and had made purchase of an entire *caxon*. He determined to point out this ornament

ornament as an object of ridicule ; and therefore contrived to seat himself near her, where he had not been long placed before he exclaimed—

“ This room is so confoundedly hot, that I advise every one to pull off their wigs.—What say you, Mrs. Alderman ? ”

“ Sir,” replied the lady, “ I think it would be very rude in any gentleman to pull off his wig in the presence of ladies.”

“ Gentlemen—I did not say gentlemen, Madam ; and d——n me if I do not think there would be many bare-headed ladies as well as gentlemen. Things are made so deceiving now-a-days ; I swear that this hair of your’s looks for all the world like the wigs in the great wig-makers’ shop at the Court end of the town.”

“ Look, Sir,” said Mrs. Caxon ; “ look, would any one take my hair for a wig ? but

you are always so vulgar and low, that I declare I am always in a fright when I come near your house."

"Pray, Madam," said a lady, who played with her, "do not you bray on that card?"

"Oh yes, to be sure you do," said Mr. Middleton; "and if you have nothing else to bray on, burn me if I wouldn't bray my old wig there."

"You are the most provoking man I ever knew."

"Come, come, shake hands, and don't be angry; you knew me before to-day; I was only joking," and rising, he leaned his head over her chair, and whispered, "We ought to kiss, and be friends; but there's too much company now, so we'll leave it till next time;" and he turned from her, to converse with a party who had just ended a rubber

rubber at Caffino, when a loud scream, followed by a laugh from behind, attracted his attention, as well as that of the whole company. Who shall speak his astonishment at beholding Mrs. Caxon entirely despoiled of her tresses, and bare-headed, exposed to the mirth of the spectators, and the unfortunate "*Tête a la Grecque*" suspended from the button of his own coat!

An universal titter pervaded the room, and communicated itself to the one adjoining, which was in consequence emptied into the tumultuous apartment, which was so thronged, that many persons were obliged to mount themselves on the tables and chairs, and the uproar was general.

Mr. Middleton, seriously vexed at the exposure which he had been the innocent cause of, now attempted to reinstate the Grecian trophy. Fresh and louder peals of

laughter agitated the company ; for, unaccustomed to attend the toilets of the fair, he had injudiciously placed the hind part before.

Mrs. Caxon, now more than ever enraged, pulled it from him ; and having placed it on her head, retired, jostling the company with her elbows until she made a way out, exclaiming—" You may depend on my informing the Alderman ; we shall see if I am to be insulted with impunity !"

Mrs. Middleton followed to apologize, but the lady was inexorable.—Our heroine had all this time been engaged in a very different manner. Frederic, hearing there was to be a grand gala in the house of Mr. Middleton, determined to seize what appeared to him a favourable opportunity of procuring an interview with Caroline. Jenny was not in the way, and a servant, by his desire,

desire, shewed him into the street parlour, and went to call Miss Vincent. Caroline at first debated whether she ought to answer the summons of a stranger who refused to send up his name ; but she determined to go, convinced she could be in no danger while so many people were in the house.

“ Good God !” cried she, starting as she entered, “ good Heavens, Mr. Godfrey, is it possible ?”

“ Yes, Caroline,” he replied, “ it is Mr. Godfrey, it is the forsaken Frederic.— Well may you be amazed to find that, after your desertion, he again throws himself in your way : but I come to demand of you an explanation ; I come to ask why, having raised me to hope, you madly plunged me into despair, exposed me to the bitterest anguish ; and why, having fixed the day for our indissoluble union, you left me, cruelly

left me without assigning any reason, without my having an idea of the place to whence you had flown, without a parting word?—My happiness, my peace of mind, were as little worthy of your consideration as my love was of your's in return; both were sacrificed at the shrine of Major Mortimer. But I will not tamely lose you; he shall feel my resentment; he shall answer for his conduct; nor while I live, shall he securely triumph."

"Frederic," said Caroline, her voice almost choked by her sobs, choked by tenderness, and tremulous from agitation, "believe me, your resentment against him would be vain and futile. I have no engagement or attachment whatever to Major Mortimer; my heart is wholly and solely your own; circumstances the most cruel have conspired to prevent our union, which
will

will probably, too probably, never take place. Indeed I do not, I ought not to wish it should. I love you fervently, ardently, sincerely, yet you now behold me for the last time ; for after this night I am resolved never more to see you."

"Tell me not you love me," cried Frederic ; "call me not your beloved Frederic ; rather say you hate, you despise me ; say you have plighted that faith to my rival you have before falsified to me ; say that you revel in licentious pleasure, that you are the companion of his looser hours ; say at once that you are lost alike to virtue and honour, and do not trifle with the feelings of a heart like mine. A time will come," continued he, walking about the room in violent agitation, "when you will lament its loss, when you will reproach yourself for its sufferings,

and will vainly lament your dereliction from virtue !”

“ Almighty Providence !” cried Caroline, bursting into tears, “ what an accusation !— And is your confidence in my honour, your reliance on my fidelity so small, so very small ? Cannot you believe me when I affirm my virtue is un sullied, my affection for you unshaken ? My heart aches at our separation, yet I am convinced it is unavoidable ; and though appearances are against me, have that reliance on my honour which in similar circumstances I would place in your’s. I am assured of the strength of my own resolution, while, conscious of rectitude, I feel, severely feel, my own situation, and the malignant censures which, I have no doubt, are attached to my conduct ; yet I cannot confide in you : a promise the most sacred, the most inviolable withholds
me,

me, and the same promise demands our separation."

"It shall not be, by Heaven!" exclaimed Fréderic; "no power on earth shall tear you from me. Your engagement to me was prior to every other; it is more sacred, more inviolable. In the sight of the Almighty you are my wife; nor will I again lose you until the indissoluble knot is tied.—Behold me, Caroline," continued he, tenderly taking her hand, "a suppliant for your mercy; not the gay Fréderic you once knew me, but one whom misery has humbled. Trace in this altered figure the ravages grief and despair have caused in this lacerated bosom: reflect on my recent disappointment, my yet more recent loss; and dread their effects on a mind, ardent, impetuous as mine. Dread also a meeting
between

between me and my hated rival, whose life shall answer for his presumption."

"Oh," said Caroline, lifting up her hands in an attitude of supplication, "do not, do not see him; do not lay up for yourself ages of remorse and repentance; he is not, cannot be any thing to me; I have never met him but by accident—only casually have I been in his company. I have not seen him more than three times since I have been in London."

"Then wherefore this terror?" said Frederic. "From whence this anxiety for his safety?"

"Oh impute it not to his account—for you, not him, am I alarmed. Oh Frederic, my dear Frederic, promise, swear you will not meet him in an hostile manner; ease my fearful, my bursting heart! Speak, say you will be calm!"

"If,"

“ If,” returned Frederic, “ you wish to see me calm, if you have the slightest regard for me, if my happiness is worth your consideration, tell me, tell me truly why you left Wales? and why the silence and secrecy of night were chosen to aid your flight?”

“ Alas!” cried she, sinking into a chair, overcome by contending emotions, “ alas! it is impossible; worlds cannot bribe me to betray the confidence reposed in me. Oh did no fatal prohibition stay me—Oh were I free and unshackled, this hour, this minute would I be your’s; every doubt should be explained; every cause of suspicion cleared. You should have no reason to doubt my love; yet credit me when I assert, so peculiarly am I circumstanced, I cannot even wish to be united to you without committing a crime; and were I called on
again

again in the same manner, I ought to repeat my fatal promise, and resign my love."

"Condescend then," said Frederic, "to become mine. I will rely on your honour, and our marriage shall remain a secret to every one but your mother."

"No, Frederic, much as I love you, I will never become your wife while a shadow of suspicion remains attached to my conduct. Before that period, every action must be explained, every motive known. In this world I am divided from you for ever, unless we meet on equal terms. My fame you will one day acknowledge unspotted, my character still pure and uncontaminated, and my family and connections such as would not disgrace an exalted station; consequently you would receive no degradation from an alliance with me. In the present state of circumstances I can never behold your
friends.

friends. I should dread, above all, to encounter Mr. Fitzmorris and your sister."

"Good God! then is my family indeed so hateful to you? Is my sister, the gentle Emma, despised? Is the noble-hearted, the generous Fitzmorris detested?"

"Alas!" said Caroline, "mistake me not; I love, I esteem your sister; I reverence, I filially regard Mr. Fitzmorris; in any other situation I should rejoice to meet them: yet until—when——" A dreadful

recollection at that moment crossed her mind, and clasping her hands, she exclaimed—

"Although I long to see, to be re-united to you all—although death would be preferable to a separation, and my heart bleeds at the necessity, yet we must part.—Farewel for ever!" and then, without giving him time to detain her, she rushed out of the room, and gained her own apartment;—

and

and having turned the key to prevent an interruption, she flung herself on the bed, and gave free vent to the emotions of her heart in a violent flood of tears.

After her departure, Frederic stood for some time, too much astonished and confounded to know what he did. At length recollection returned, but it returned only to bewilder and agonize him; he believed Caroline's assertion of her innocence; he was internally convinced of her fidelity; he had certain testimony of her regard; her agitation, her tears, her emotion—these could not be feigned.

“Then,” said he, mentally, “what is this dreadful bar to our union, that I must be unacquainted with it? She appeared to hope that time might dispel it. Alas, no! for she lamented that even her wishes for the accomplishment of our union must be criminal.—

She

She told me we must meet no more, and yet said that hereafter I might be in possession of her hand, when my family would feel no disgrace in her alliance. Inexplicable mystery! Fatal separation!—Yet I will not thus lose her. I will still pursue her; I will obtain her; nothing but a conviction of her baseness shall make me relinquish the pursuit.”

He now quitted the house; but the door was opened by Mrs. Jenny, who put a letter into his hand, and her finger on her lips in token of silence. She had almost immediately discovered our heroine's *tête-à-tête*; and eager to obtain another of the Major's “golden guineas,” she hurried down stairs to deliver the letter she had been charged with. Frederic put the letter into his pocket, almost unconsciously; and, totally absorbed in his own contemplations, forgot where he was going until aroused from his reverie

reverie by the sound of voices many streets distant from what should have been the place of his destination. He hesitated some moments ; the voices grew louder and louder ; he proceeded a few paces, and again retreated. " Shall I," thought he, " falter in the cause of humanity ? Shall I be undecided when it may be in my power to assist a fellow-creature ? For the paltry consideration of my own safety, shall I barter the reward of an approving conscience ?"

His deliberations were instantly over, and rushing to the door of a small house, from whence the noise proceeded, he entered, and beheld a man most unmercifully beating a poor and decrepid old woman. Frederic unfortunately had no weapon of defence about him ; but seizing the oppressor by the collar of his coat, he asked if it was his intention to commit murder.

The

The man uttered a curse between his clenched teeth, and let go his hold; then vehemently wrenching himself from Frederic, he ran out of the house without saying another word.

"God be praised," said the old woman, lifting up her hands, "God be praised! I am sure, Sir, if you had not thus providentially have come to my assistance, it would have been all over with me. Well, God is just! I deserve punishment, though not from him."

"God is," answered Frederic, "undoubtedly just and merciful; but tell me the cause of the scene I have so recently witnessed."

"You look," cried she, earnestly gazing in his face, "you look like a man of honour. I think I may trust you; yet what gratification can the history of a life like mine afford, unless indeed a warning, a salutary warning?"

You

You must know then, Sir, that the man who has just quitted me is my husband, and I am ignorant of any offence committed against him. Alas! he has been the cause of my miseries—he is the author of my undoing;—he has driven me down the precipice of guilt, and has loaded my conscience with a heavy burden of sins; he has ruined me in this world, and he would even now send me, unprepared, into the presence of my Almighty Judge! I am the offspring of poor, but industrious people, who maintained a numerous family by hard labour. I had, from my childhood, a remarkable ear for music, and a good voice, which occasioned my being noticed by a musician in the city of Bath;—he took me from my father, and I was apprenticed to him for the term of fourteen years. When I was nineteen, the last year of my servitude, I first became acquainted with

with Mr. O'Sullivan. I was handsome, and had many admirers; he insinuated himself into my favour, and, skilled in the arts of seduction, he reduced me to a level with vice and infamy. My master, who was really a good man, no sooner discovered my frailty, than he dismissed me from his family, and I retired to a lodging provided for me by my undoer: he was a man of no property, and I soon found that his business in Bath was to provide for himself in a matrimonial way:—in short, he was an Irish fortune-hunter.—For some time I supported both him and myself by my vocal talents, which were universally acknowledged; but O'Sullivan's unbounded passion for gambling prevented my efforts from being successful, and we were soon obliged to fly to his native country. The manager of the Dublin Theatre engaged me; I had a splendid salary, and could

could O'Sullivan have curbed his fatal passion, and would he have made me reparation by marriage for the wrongs he had done me, we might have been happy. At this time my love for him was unabated, but I had soon cause to despise him.—I had soon reason to lament bitterly my fatal connection with him ; he attempted to make me yield myself to the vilest shame, and proposed living and sharing with me the wages of sin ; for alas ! what was my stipend for the support of a gamester ? We sometimes rolled in profusion, and at others were reduced to the most deplorable want. I concealed my indignation at his proposal, and determined, in my turn, to deceive him. I affected to appear pleased at the idea of duping some rich man, while I secretly resolved to promote my own fortune, and, if possible, render it permanent by marriage. My wishes were
soon

soon gratified by proposals from a gentleman of fortune and family, and I became the wife of Mr. Fitzmorris."

"Gracious Heavens!" exclaimed Frederic, starting from his seat, "my grandfather! You now behold before you the son of Emma Fitzmorris, the son of that injured saint, who, but for the generosity of her brother, had been an orphan, without friends or fortune, perhaps depending for support on the bounty of strangers!"

"Alas!" cried the female, wringing her hands, "she is amply revenged; every day that has passed over my head, has added to my misery; every revolving year has added fresh thorns to my wounded bosom. Repentance, I fear, is unavailing for crimes like mine; yet could you behold the heart which now mourns incessantly its former vices—could you feel, as I do, the worm of

conscience, that never dies, gnawing by degrees the vital thread of life, you would pity, you would forgive me. Your angelic mother is now beyond the reach of calamity.— If it be permitted her to behold, from the regions of felicity, those who still wander in this sublunary scene, she will view, with complacency, my restoration to virtue—she will hail my return to those paths from which I have so fatally strayed, and will perhaps plead for me before the throne of the Omnipotent.”

“ Mrs. O’Sullivan,” said Frederic, “ you are right. I will promote your repentance ; I will be your friend ; the generous Fitzmorris shall assist your endeavours ; from this time the past shall be forgotten. We will secure you from the wretch who torments you ; we will consider you in future as the
widow

widow of my grandfather. Will you be so good as to continue your narration?"

Mrs. O'Sullivan then proceeded as follows:

"Mr. Fitzmorris had, you know, two children. Before I married, I had persuaded him to send his son abroad, and I soon contrived to rid myself of his daughter. O'Sullivan no sooner found me settled, than he came to my house, and, by his continual threats, persecutions, and remonstrances, I at last was compelled (to get rid of him) to give him a bond of ten thousand pounds, to be put in force if, after the death of Mr. Fitzmorris, I should refuse to marry him.—The short time Mr. Fitzmorris survived after this was the only period of content I ever experienced after my dereliction from virtue. Yet here I had weaved fresh sources of misery for myself: the slightest indisposition in my husband threw me into agonies,

which he attributed to my affection for him. It was the sword, however, which hung, as I may say, by a hair over my head, which prevented my ever knowing peace; it was the continual dread not of losing him, but of becoming the companion of the dissolute O'Sullivan, who was, I knew, tempted to force me into the engagement by the liberal settlement which Mr. Fitzmorris had secured to me. Alas! had he ever possessed a sincere, an honourable affection for me—had he ever felt a wish to be allied to me, my fame had been untarnished—I had lived beloved, and died respected.—I have never been sensible of the heartfelt rapture kindled by parental tenderness. I had no kind friend to watch over my early years; no one instilled into my infant mind those principles of religion and virtue which would have guarded it from error and frailty, which would have counter-acted

acted the ebullitions of passion. I was never taught to improve my mind; it was left to its own guidance, and fell a prey to vanity and vice;—but the person was embellished; every art was used to set my attractions in the most conspicuous point of view, as if beauty were the grand desideratum of female excellence—as if I had been born only for the glittering tinsel of an hour. Would to God that I had been placed in some menial station! Would to God that I had been brought up to some laborious, honest employment, far from the temptations of the world, far from the busy haunts of men. Yet why this incessant repining at the dispensations of Providence? Even there might I have experienced temptation—even there might I have strayed.

“ Mr. Fitzmorris died within three years after our union, and I was compelled to give

my hand to the wretch whom you just now saw ; and, through an abject fear of losing my so recently acquired wealth, I resigned my independence, and ultimately became a beggar. In a short time Mr. O'Sullivan left Ireland, and came to reside in London ; he then sold my annuity, and who can describe my feelings when I found that the fortune I had perpetrated crimes to gain, was thrown away on the cast of a die ; yet complaint was useless, and only produced from my tormenter barbarity and outrage : and the situation you beheld me in this night, is only a repetition of what he has inflicted on me at different times. I was obliged to bear all without complaint. I who could acquire, and keep up for years an ascendancy over a sensible and virtuous mind, was easily subdued into insignificance by the specious artifices of a villain, who possessed not half my

my own intellectual abilities. My health is gone ; my beauty is no more ; old age has overtaken me ; it has pleased the Almighty to give me a proper sense of my former life, and, though late, I hope the sincerity of my repentance will be accepted : deservedly am I punished for my conduct towards your amiable mother. I acknowledge the justice of Providence, and submit to his dispensations without repining. Since my conviction of the wickedness of my past life, I have exerted in vain every effort to awaken Mr. O'Sullivan to a sense of his abandoned state. Alas ! I fear he is utterly cast away ; for I find, by a woman with whom he was formerly connected, that he now assumes the name of a nobleman, in hopes of introducing himself into some opulent family, and contracting a marriage with some one who will bring him another fortune to squander.—I

know he thinks I have not long to live; I feel that he wishes to hasten my dissolution. I live in continual apprehension; and, but for your timely interference, should most probably have been this night numbered with the dead."——

Morning dawned ere Frederic could determine what measure he ought to pursue to secure the safety of Mrs. O'Sullivan. At length he resolved to take her to an apartment of the house where he himself lodged, and to apprise a magistrate of her husband's conduct, who should be bound over to keep the peace. This was accordingly done, and much to the astonishment of Frederic, a man in respectable business entered into the necessary recognizance for Mr. O'Sullivan:—this being done, Mrs. O'Sullivan retired, and soon sunk into the arms of Morpheus.

But

But the occurrences of the past night prevented Frederic from closing his eyes : he therefore set about writing to his uncle ; and having given him a circumstantial account of himself since his arrival in town, he waited until he thought Mr. Middleton's family would be stirring, when he resolved again to present himself before Caroline, and force from her a consent to their union. Accidentally, however, putting his hand in his pocket, he found the letter given him by Mrs. Jenny ;—he was some moments ere he could recollect how it came into his possession ; but his surprise was succeeded by a variety of emotions when he read as follows in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

"Then fare thee well, most foul, most fair!"

"SIR,

"IF so be as your neame is Godfree, this coms to lett you knaw, that thof but a simple sarvant gurl, I can see as well as another.— Now, Sir, this is to tell you that I overyeard Miss Wincent and the Mager a talking together, and Miss Wincent tould the Mager that he had varnished her vartoo, and she said what coud she do; and then the Mager, he said, when you com'd to see her, she shoud dever

dever to parswad you that she was hinocent, and then you would marry she, and they coud kip company for all that. But this is a small matter to what they am up to. I woud wish every body to father his own child. Now the truth is, some volks are bigger than when they first com'd to Lindon, for all tight lacing. So having no more at presence, I remains your humble sarvant at all commands,

“JANE SLOCOMBE.”

“Damnation!” cried Frederic, stamping, and flinging the letter with violence to the further end of the room, “to make me her tame fool!—but she is deceived. She must find some one else to suit her convenience.—Shall I put up with this aggravated insult? Shall I tamely sit down, and not revenge my-

self? Shall such complicated deception be permitted to walk about in the noon-day sun? No, I will hurl the villain Mortimer from the face of the earth; I will hunt him from society, nor while I live shall he securely triumph. And was my name to be the cloke of vice, was my wife to have been the convenient wanton of Major Mortimer? But by Heavens it cannot be—it is false as hell. Alas!—no, it is fatally too true, and she is lost to me for ever. Oh Caroline, Caroline! hadst thou been innocent, thou couldst have had no motive for concealment; thou wouldst not have fled from my ardent, my sincere affection; thou wouldst not now have refused me thy society; thou wouldst explain every thing which appears mysterious in thy conduct. But,” continued he, striking his forehead with his clenched fist, “ it is

is clear, sufficiently clear—I have been wilfully blind when I believed her. Yet, alas !” and he melted into tears as he spoke, “ it was the credulity of love ; her manner appeared to me indicative of innocence ; her energy, the energy of affection ; and her voice, ah ! it has always been to me the voice of persuasion. Gracious Providence ! how abandoned to every feeling of virtue, how base, how deliberately base ! Oh Caroline ! ‘ hadst thou been true, would Heaven have given me such another world, of one entire and perfect chrysolite, I’d not have changed thee for it.’ But it is past for ever ; I can no more place faith or confidence in one who has already betrayed me ; I can no more listen in speechless rapture to the music of thy voice, no more hearken to the seducing tenderness of thy language, no more view the graces of thy elegant person.—

Alas !

Alas ! past for ever is the soul-subduing tenderness with which I formerly beheld thee ; never more will it return ; never again shall I ‘ hang over thee enamoured ’ of the ineffable graces with which the fond eye of partiality-irradiated thy countenance ! ”

Frederic continued for some time walking to and fro in his apartment, talking to himself, sometimes acquitting, but oftener condemning Caroline, until he had worked his mind into such a state of ferment and disorder, as to be entirely unconscious of his own actions. Without taking any refreshment, he again sallied forth into the streets, without having an intention of going any where, and with that restlessness ever attendant on misery, only with the hope of flying from himself. Three several times he had found himself at Mr. Middleton’s door in Fleet Street ; as often had he returned to his
own

own lodgings. Sometimes he resolved to force himself into the presence of Caroline, and reproach her with her infidelity; then again he determined to fly from her as far as possible. Sometimes he would vow vengeance against Major Mortimer; then curse his own credulous fondness in having suffered himself to be an instant imposed on. He wandered, careless and unheeding, through the vast metropolis, regardless of the "busy hum of men." Each seemed too much occupied by his own concerns to regard the bystander or the passenger. The merchant, the stock-jobber, the broker, all awaited, with anxiety, the arrival of news, which might either make their respective fortunes, or render them bankrupts.

The concourse of people was discordant to Frederic; he wished to fly from them, from Caroline, and the place which contained her,

her, but most from his own thoughts. His figure, gentle reader, at this time was not the most prepossessing; his hair had not been touched since the preceding day; his eyes were languid, heavy, and red for want of rest; and his whole frame trembled, from the yet unsubdued agitation of his mind.— He strolled through Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, but was unable to pass for a crowd, which was gathered round a milliner's shop.

“What is the matter?” cried he, almost involuntarily.

“Very true, Sir,” said the man, whom he addressed himself to, “it is a sad pity, as you say, that a lady should do such a thing.”

“I asked you, friend,” said Frederic, raising his voice, “what was the matter?”

“Anan!” said the old man.

“It

“It is only,” said a bystander, “a young woman who has been detected in stealing a few pieces of ribbon. One would not think, to look at her, that butter would melt in her mouth; but there’s no knowing; one sees stranger things than this every day.”

“I dare say,” said a fat lady, “she is no better than a wanton, for all she looks so fine. Well, God be praised, I always knows them people by their faces, and I would never trust one of ’em in my shop.”

Frederic now forced himself into the shop, feeling a sort of curiosity to behold the object of all this uproar; but who can speak his horror, his astonishment, when he saw in the person of the accused his beloved, his still adored Caroline!

• This

"This the thief!" cried he.—"Is this lady, friend, the person you accuse of stealing your ribbon?"

"Sir," answered the man, "as to her being a lady, why that's another guess matter—I know nothing about that; but as to her taking the ribbon, I believe the matter of that will go pretty much against her."

"Very well, Sir," said Frederic, every idea now lost but the single one of rescuing his Caroline, whether guilty or innocent, from the contumelious impertinence of the pitiless trader, and alarmed at seeing her in such a situation.—"You say this lady has stolen your ribbon?"

"Yes, Sir," replied the man, after some hesitation.

"Then, Madam," continued Frederic, turning to Caroline, "it now only remains for you to prove this accusation false."

Caroline

Caroline was too much overcome to articulate ; she opened her mouth, but no voice was heard ; she lifted up her hands, and motioned to him that she was innocent of the crime she was charged with. Thrown entirely off his guard at witnessing her emotion, he cried—

“ Caroline, my beloved Caroline, I doubt it not ; compose your mind, I entreat you ; I will be your protector ; I will see justice done you ; no one shall insult you with impunity.”

- Somewhat re-assured by his promise of protection, Caroline now entreated to be heard, and desired to be searched by one of the females in the shop.

“ No,” exclaimed Frederic, “ one of them may witness against you. One of these indifferent spectators shall also come.”

He then beckoned to a woman outside the door ; and these two females retiring
into

into a room with her, Caroline entirely disrobed herself before them. Her innocence was clear; no ribbon was to be found.—Frederic now insisted on the man's searching his shop, counter, &c. and the ribbons were discovered in a situation in which it was impossible any one from the outside of the counter could have placed them."

"Now, Sir," said Frederic, "I command you to disperse the multitude which your villanous accusations have assembled."

The man, after many apologies for his mistake, as he was pleased to term it, did as he was commanded: and Frederic, telling him he should hear from him the following day, was proceeding to conduct Caroline out of the house; but entirely subdued by the agitation she had undergone, she no sooner attempted to move, than she sunk senseless on the ground. A coach was immediately

immediately procured, and Frederic, having put her into it, followed himself, ordering the man to drive to Mr. Middleton's, Fleet Street.

"God in Heaven bless your sweet face!" exclaimed an old woman as the door of the carriage shut on them; "but for you the rascal would have sent an innocent young lady to gaol: but no wonder—I do hate them there Jews. God forgive me, but they are not like Christians."

Frederic put his hand into his pocket, and threw the poor wretch a half-crown piece; and she again repeated her prayers to God to bless "his Honour's Worship."

Frederic exerted all his endeavours to restore the senseless Caroline; he supported her in his arms while her head leaned on his bosom; he pressed her to his heart in unutterable anguish, for to that heart from
henceforth

henceforth she was to become an alien.— His anger vanished in the softer emotions which took possession of his soul, and pity at her helpless situation alone predominated. He burst into tears ; he reflected on the past felicity they had together enjoyed ; he remembered the happiness which he once flattered himself he should experience with her ; he now beheld all these prospects blasted ;—he beheld Caroline Vincent unworthy of him ; yet, notwithstanding all this, he could not efface the indelible impression she had rooted in his heart.

“ No,” cried he, mentally, “ my heart will still cherish the dear idea ; it will still retain its fond partiality ; and though now she must never become my wife, yet I cannot so far forget the past as to transfer those affections on another, once fixed on her.”

Caroline

Caroline now opened her eyes ; and no sooner had she recovered her recollection, than she thanked him for his timely interposition.

“ But for you,” said she, “ Heaven only knows what would have become of me !”

The momentary anxiety over which he had suffered on her account, Frederic saw the necessity of convincing her he was no longer to be duped by her artifices, no longer the slave of unrequited passion ; he therefore desired her, in a cold and repulsive manner, to make no acknowledgments for what was only a common act of humanity, which he hoped any one would alike have performed. Caroline looked at him with astonishment, his manner being so different from what it had been at their late interview.

6

“ Alas !”

“ Alas ! ” sighed she to herself, in the words of an admired poet ;—

“ And fall those sayings from that gentle tongue,

“ Where modest speech, with soft persuasion, hung ?

“ Whose artful sweetness and harmonious strain,

“ Courting my grace, yet courting it in vain,

“ Call’d sighs, and tears, and wishes to its aid,

“ And while it Henry’s glowing flame convey’d,

“ Still blam’d the coldness of the nut-brown maid.” }

She, however, spoke not ; delicacy prevented any attempt on her part towards a reconciliation ; and the silence was unbroken till they reached Fleet Street, where, having set her down, Frederic discharged the coach, and coolly wishing her a good day, he once more returned to his own lodgings. He now attempted to compose his mind, and to take some nourishment, but he was unsuccessful ; his limbs almost refused

refused their office ; his mouth was parched and dry, and, after various efforts, he could only swallow a glass of wine. He then tried to sleep ; but the variety of ideas which crowded successively on his imagination, effectually “ murdered sleep,” and he again rose and left the house, in hopes, by continual bodily exertion, to banish reflection. He strolled into a coffee-house, and accidentally taking up a newspaper, he read an account of the decease of old Mr. Edwin ; he gave a short sigh to his memory, and thought he himself had been happier, had he left this world of trials also. He called for negus, and drank several glasses rapidly ; the blood mounted to his cheeks in boiling currents.—The clock struck twelve ;—he rose to depart ; yet he thought not of returning home ; he had no one to welcome his return ; he wandered through the street in which resided

his lost Caroline ; a cold chill ran through his whole frame ; he cast his eyes on the house that contained an object, which, though unworthy, he must ever love, and in a window on the first floor he thought he beheld a female figure contemplating the shadows of the passengers, as the moon reflected them on the opposite side of the way.

“ It is her, even now perhaps thinking on my hated rival,” sighed he ; and he walked on, and pursued his way through many different streets. The clock struck one, and he again returned to take a last look of the house inhabited by Caroline. But who shall speak his consternation—it was in flames !—He knocked violently at the door, exclaiming, “ For the love of God save yourselves ; quick, fly ; the house is on fire ; stay not an instant ; every moment is precious. For God’s sake open the door !”

The

The door of the house was opened, and the family rushed into the street, some partly clad, some half dressed, but all in such a state of terror and distraction as to be ignorant of every thing but a confused fear of they knew not what. The watchmen were by this time assembled, the fire-bells rung, and the neighbouring houses were soon emptied of their inhabitants. Frederic's first care was to enquire for Caroline; she was no where to be met with.

"Oh God," cried he, "she is dead!—Caroline is no more!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Gertrude Middleton, "Miss Vincent, my dear Miss Vincent, where are you? I knocked at the door of her room, but could get no answer. I then thought she had made her escape before me; but she is stifled, I know she is!"

"Come with me," cried Frederic; "only shew me the door; I will break it open."

Gertrude went with him, but the staircase was no more—it had fallen in.

"Where are you?" exclaimed Frederic; "Caroline, my beloved girl, where are you?"

A gentle voice was now heard from above to exclaim—

"For the love of mercy, some charitable Christian, come to my assistance!"

A female figure appeared at the window Frederic had before observed. She lifted the sash—it was Caroline herself. With the help of the lamp-post, Frederic now climbed up to the window, and, with the assistance of one of the spectators, he let her slip gently into the arms of a gentleman, who had come to his relief. Fortunately she was unhurt. He then got down himself the same way by
which

which he had before ascended, and saw her conveyed in safety to the rest of the family, who were sheltered in the house of a friend in the neighbourhood. Here, unable to bear up any longer under the extreme fatigue and agitation he had endured for so many hours, he sunk into a seat, and was for some time unable to move.

“Frederic,” cried Caroline, “you look ill; I am afraid you are hurt.”

“No,” exclaimed he, laying his hand on his heart, “I am not hurt—I am well, very well.—But I have that within which——” His voice failed him.

“You are agitated, you are fatigued,” exclaimed Caroline, losing every trace of his behaviour the preceding day; “suffer me to get you something. Ah! my dear Frederic, the time was if your Caroline only hinted her wishes, and desired

you to do any thing, she was certain of your compliance ; but those days are passed."

" The time was indeed," said Frederic.—" Alas ! how surely is it gone for ever ! Oh Caroline, Caroline !" he took her hand between his—" Oh ! though you have sacrificed my peace of mind for ever, yet I beseech the Almighty to bless you ! Though you have eternally blasted my hopes, I will pray for the accomplishment of your's ; and though to leave you is far worse than death to this agonized heart, yet honour, principle, religion, all demand the sacrifice ; and, in compliance with their dictates, I tear myself from you. Oh God ! that it should come to this ! Oh Caroline, Caroline ! view the ruin, the devastation you have made. Oh my throbbing brain !"

He

He then quitted her without giving her time to answer him ; and finding his legs tremble, so as to disable him from proceeding, he got a coach, and was set down at his lodgings precisely as the clock struck three. He retired to his own apartment, where Mrs. Martin (the woman of the house) found him in the afternoon stretched on the bed in a high fever. He raved continually on the infidelity of Caroline, and on the scenes he had so recently witnessed.

Mrs. Martin was sincerely concerned at his situation, yet knew not how to proceed respecting him, being entirely ignorant of his connections. Fortunately, however, in this dilemma she consulted her new lodger, Mrs. O'Sullivan, who recollected Frederic having told her that Mr. Fitzmorris was in Bath. She knew a letter directed to that

place could not fail to find him ; she therefore wrote as follows :—

“ The writer of this letter would never again have obtruded herself on the remembrance of Mr. Fitzmorris, who, she is well convinced, cannot regard her but with disgust and abhorrence ; yet you behold her now, not the proud wretch who triumphs in the exaltation she had acquired by infamy and deceit—not the slave of vice and folly, but one whom misery has humbled, and adversity taught to reflect with horror on her former profligate life. I am your father’s widow ; good fortune introduced me to your generous nephew ; he became my protector ; he has placed me beyond the reach of my bitter enemy ; he has shielded me from the keen tooth of want :—prepare your mind ere you go on ; he is ill, very ill—

ill—perhaps dying. The Almighty only can restore him to us; I fear all human aid will be ineffectual. His disorder appears originally to have proceeded from the mind; he has, for these two days past, I find, on enquiry, appeared much agitated, and for two nights he has never been in bed. His ravings continue with unceasing violence; and unless he can get some sleep, the physician gives no hopes. You may depend on nothing being neglected which can conduce to his recovery. Gratitude, as well as a wish to expiate, in some measure, by my attention to him, the wrongs I inflicted on his mother, will confine me entirely to his chamber, where I hope soon to behold you.

“ I remain, with the utmost respect,

“ Your obliged humble servant,

“ HARRIET O’SULLIVAN.”

CHAP. IV.

- “ No longer shall the boddice aptly lac’d,
“ From thy full bosom to thy slender waist—
“ That air of harmony, and shape express
“ Fine by degrees, and beautifully less—
“ No longer shall thy comely tresses break,
“ In flowing ringlets, round thy circling neck,
“ Or set behind thy head in ample round,
“ Or artful braid, with various ribbon bound ;
“ Nor shall thy lower garments artful plait,
“ From thy fair side dependent to thy feet,
“ Arm their chaste beauties with a modest pride,
“ And double every harm they seek to hide.—
“ The ambrosial plenty of thy shining hair,
“ Cropt off and lost, scarce lower than thine ear,
“ Shall stand uncouth. A horseman’s coat shall hide
“ Thy taper waist, and harmony of side.
“ The short trunk hose shall shew thy foot and knee,
“ Licentious, and to common eye-sight free.
“ And with a bolder stride, and looser air,
“ Mingled with men, a man thou must appear.”

IT is now time to give the reader some information respecting the household of Mr. Fitzmorris. Since we left them to pursue
the

the despairing Frederic to London, a sort of fatality appeared to follow this amiable but unfortunate man : every one connected with him experienced, in some degree, the effects of the darkness which enveloped his destiny. He saw the happiness of his nephew totally destroyed by a young woman whose sweetness had interested him in her favour, and whose appearance and manner had every indication not only of innocence and virtue, but of that elevation of sentiment, that native dignity of soul, which could never, he thought, be the concomitant of a low or vulgar origin ; yet this very woman had now thrown off every vestige of propriety : she had eloped, when on the very point of marriage with the man of her own unbiassed choice.

“ This inconsistency of conduct,” said he, “ can only result from the internal
F 6 depravity’

pravity of her heart, and the entire corruption of her morals."

He sighed as he reflected that this was the second time in his life that he had been deceived by a beautiful countenance. Nor was Fitzmorris easy on Emma's account: by the death of his father, Mr. Edwin was at liberty to declare his marriage, and claim his bride; yet he came not—no letter or memorial of him had arrived since his departure from Cornwall. Fitzmorris had written to his steward at Morris Town, and from him had received information that Mr. Edwin led a gay and dissipated life; and, in defiance of the more sober and decent part of mankind, that he openly lived with a young woman in Dublin. Fitzmorris lamented his own infatuation, which assisted in accelerating an union which presaged at

6 present

present so unfavourable an issue. He rejoiced that Mr. Godfrey no longer existed to witness the demolition of his children's happiness; and though he still felt acutely his own troubles, yet his compassionate and feeling heart sympathized sincerely with the suffering children of his departed Emma, and he mourned together his own and their misfortunes. The letter of Mrs. O'Sullivan found Mr. Fitzmorris in great affliction; he had been surprised that morning by Wilson, who, running into the breakfast-room, where he was sitting with Mrs. Dixon, waiting the arrival of Emma, exclaimed—

“ Oh my master, my dear master, I am afraid you will never forgive your old servant; he would rather, much rather die than offend so good, so kind a friend.”

“ What is the matter, Wilson?” said Fitzmorris, mildly, while his whole frame trembled

trembled at fear of what might follow this enquiry.

“ Miss Emma is gone,” answered Wilson.—“ Heaven only knows where ; but what vexes me more than all is, that I fear I have been instrumental in her quitting you ;—but God knows my heart, I never knew she intended to leave us.”

“ Tell me in an instant,” cried Fitzmorris, the colour forsaking his face, “ all that you know.”

“ Yesterday,” returned Wilson, “ Miss Emma asked me to lend her some money, to take a poor woman to Ireland, to join her husband. She said she did not like to tell you of it, for a reason which I should soon know, and she would give me a note of hand for the money. To-day Mary says she is no where to be found, and that she has not been in bed all night ; and that yesterday

yesterday she sent her to the White Lion, to order a chaise to be ready at twelve o'clock, to take a person to Bristol. I am sure, if I had known she meant to leave us, she should sooner have had my old head.—God knows, your Honour, I would sooner do any thing on earth than offend you.”

“I see, I know it all,” exclaimed Fitzmorris.—“Wilson, I have no doubt of your fidelity; be satisfied—she is gone to join Mr. Edwin in Ireland. It is no longer a time for concealment—she is married; she is the wife of Mr. Edwin; send Mary to me immediately.”

Mary soon made her appearance, and received the first intimation of her mistress's marriage. She retired from Mr. Fitzmorris's presence much displeased at Mrs. Edwin's secrecy.

“Indeed

“ Indeed I am sure,” cried she, “ the might have told me ; at least I might have been worthy to know it—I that have been trusted with untold gold. It was very wrong in Miss Emma to conceal it from me. I have lost all the perquisites of my place by it. Well, there’s no knowing—and then to travel into foreign parts, without any attendants, and into a country of savages too—I do hate them there Irishmen.”

“ You forget, Mrs. Mary,” said Wilson, hurt to hear his countrymen abused, “ that my master is an Irishman.”

“ Well,” cried Mary, “ what of that ? I like the Irish of all things—they are so clever.”

“ Just now,” said Wilson, not in the best humour imaginable, “ you called us all savages, and yet now——”

“ I am

“ I am sure, Mr. Wilson,” said Mary, casting him a glance from the corner of her hazle eye, “ I am sure I never said you was a savage, Mr. Wilson ; and besides, Mr. Wilson, a savage is black, like them savage women I saw in Bristol the other day ; they put me all in a tremble like an aspen leaf : and I was as sick——Oh Lord, how I was frightened ! I kept looking, and looking behind me all the way ; I thought sure they were the very divels, and I must up and tell—I thought they were come on no good errand, they did stare so ; and, as I said before, I shook like an aspen leaf, and a cold sweat broke out all over me, and I wished I could fell them to the earth.”

Mary now hurried up stairs, and Wilson pursued his usual occupations, while Fitz-morris, too much agitated to decide on any thing,

thing, relied on Mrs. Dixon for consolation and advice.

“Do not you think it probable,” cried he, “that she may be gone to Bristol with an intention of following her husband to Ireland? Foolish, inconsiderate girl! God only knows if she may meet with him, or how he may receive her. Alas! she may then be fatally convinced of his infidelity, and perhaps fall a sacrifice to his misconduct.”

A servant now put the letter before mentioned into his hand; he opened it, and had held it scarcely a minute ere he sunk senseless on the ground. Mrs. Dixon, when she had restored him, tried to console him, with the hope that his nephew might not be so ill as had been represented.

“It cannot admit of a doubt,” continued she, “but that you will go to him. I would
advise

advise you, therefore, to send Wilson to Bristol, to discover, if possible, whether Mrs. Edwin be yet embarked. If not, he may accompany and protect her; but if she is already on the water, I think it will be useless to pursue her, as you cannot tell where the vessel may be bound, and in all probability she will be landed in Ireland ere Wilson can procure a bark to follow her.— Wilson then shall, with your permission, accompany me to the house of Lady Clayton; and I hope soon to hear that the amiable Frederic will be restored to your wishes, and that, at my return from Wales, I shall find you all comfortably settled. In the meantime, let me hear constantly from you. Oh my dear cousin,” and she took Fitzmorris’s hand, “I have had my share of trials; yet, blessed be God, I have been supported through them. ‘The Lord gave, and

and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord !—And, after all, what is death to the good ? What is it but to be taken from a world of cares and misfortunes, to bloom anew in regions of felicity ? My children are not dead ; perhaps at this moment they are among those unnatural butchers who desolate the country which gave them being ; perhaps they have been inured to every species of vice and infamy ; and though young in years, may have arrived at a maturity in wickedness. Would to God the fond solicitude of maternal affection could be convinced that they no longer existed ! Where are you, Lionel and James—children of my heart, sole surviving remnants of the once flourishing House of O’Niel, now, alas ! desolated and forlorn ? The groves of your forefathers resound no longer with the notes of the bagpipe :

pipe : deserted is that mansion, once the seat of plenty and festivity. The owl sits there in solitary grandeur, only to mock the memory of its former chieftains, whose palace they now usurp. Oh wide domain of a once illustrious family, now fallen into ruin ! Oh transitory and evanescent splendour of wasting mortality ! a little time, and thy place and mine will be no more. No more will the lofty turret raise its head on high ;— sunk will be the battlement, and alike nameless and forgotten, the castle and its Lord.”

“ My dear Helen,” said Fitzmorris, “ pardon me, I beseech you, for recalling past scenes to your recollection ; I meant not to awaken your feelings—I meant not to agitate or alarm you.—Alas ! I see plainly that the wounds of your heart, though slightly healed, still rankle underneath, still rankle in the bosom which conceals them.—

I behold

I behold you now the same character which so many years ago claimed universal admiration ; and how high does the heiress of O'Niel rise in my estimation, when I contemplate her tranquil and well-regulated mind !— Matchless is your fortitude, my gentle cousin, in adversity ; matchless your resignation to the will of Divine Providence ; and the composure you procure yourself is partly your reward.”

“ Ah !” exclaimed Mrs. Dixon, shaking her head, “ I fear you compliment me on qualities which I possess only in idea. You know not my internal struggles ; you know not how dreadful has been to me the task of repressing my feelings, nor how bitter and evere has been the restraint which I have for many years endured. Yet when I reflect on the misfortunes of both our families, when

when I behold (as I may say) all their separate branches humbled in the dust, I cannot but think it a punishment inflicted on us by the Omnipotent for that vain-glorious pride with which we vaunted over our fellow-creatures; for though we practised every virtue of Christian charity, yet we almost considered ourselves as a superior race of beings,—and though we distributed, with an unsparing hand, the bounty of Providence, yet even this was but the ostentatious gift with which rank would render itself popular.”

“Very true,” said Fitzmorris, smiling;—
“and I hope adversity has checked this overgrown pride of ancestry. Adieu, my dear cousin!” and he hurried to the chaise, which now waited to take him to London.

Mr. Fitzmorris travelled with the utmost expedition; he found Frederic still living,
and

and rather more composed than when Mrs. O'Sullivan had dispatched her letter.—And here I must digress a little, and inform the reader that Wilton joined his master in a few days, with the information that Emma had sailed in an Irish vessel, bound, as was supposed, for the port of Dublin, and that he had seen Mrs. Dixon in safety to the house of her friend, Lady Clayton, whose Lord was at the time in a state of convalescence. Mr. Fitzmorris was warm in his thanks to Mrs. O'Sullivan for her attention to his nephew ; and, at his desire, she made him acquainted with her history. He assured her of his entire and perfect reconciliation, and proposed her taking possession of his cottage in Cornwall, as he had privately determined never again to reside there himself. Mrs. O'Sullivan expressed the most lively gratitude for his kindness, and rejoiced that

that she should yet spend the remnant of her days in tranquillity and retirement, far from that world whose allurements had proved so fatal to her. The disorder of Frederic now approached its crisis, and his physicians declared that the next day would probably decide his fate. They desired he might on no account be suffered to speak; as, should he be the least agitated, the most fatal consequences were to be apprehended. Fitzmorris sat behind the curtain of the bed, not daring to appear within sight of the invalid, lest his unexpected appearance might alarm him. His feelings were wrought up to a state of the most dreadful apprehension: a day, an hour, perhaps a moment, might deprive him of one of the remaining props of his existence, and he might again be left to mourn in solitude the loss of those tender relatives, which no sorrow could restore to

him, and which nothing in this sublunary world could recompense the loss of. One by one, had he seen all the ligaments which attached him to life, drop off; and frequently had the shafts of misfortune been levelled at his peace of mind with too sure an aim. He could not now therefore but fear every thing which the alarming state of his nephew threatened.

About noon Frederic opened his eyes, and said, in a faint voice, "Where am I?"

Mrs. O'Sullivan approached him, and said, "With your friends; but you must be quiet, as they are ordered by your physicians not to talk to you."

"Then," said he, with emotion, "answer me only one question, and I will be silent—Where is Caroline?"

"She is safe," replied Mrs. O'Sullivan, determined to quiet his mind, although ignorant

ignorant even of whom he spoke.—“Com-
pose your mind, get well, and then you
shall see all your friends.”

She then administered his medicine, and
he fell again into a composed slumber.—
And here, gentle reader, we will leave
him, return to our heroine, and give
some account of the manner in which she
became so prominent a character in the
scenes lately recorded.

The morning after the grand bustle at
Mrs. Middleton's, Caroline went to visit
her mother; and she was not a little sur-
prised and alarmed on finding her too un-
well to quit her apartment.

“My dear mother,” cried she, “why was
not your Caroline informed of your indispo-
sition? Why was not she permitted to at-
tend you? I am sure Mrs. Middleton would
have put up with any inconvenience, rather

than have suffered you to remain alone while confined to your chamber."

"Caroline," said Mrs. Vincent, "I will by and by give you the reason of my conduct; but first tell me, my dear girl, why do I see you so pale and haggard? Has any thing disturbed you, my love?"

Caroline then gave a detail of her frequent meetings with Frederic, softening as much as possible the reflections he had cast on her conduct, and the suspicions he entertained of her character.

"Alas!" cried her mother, "I am justly punished; you shall not, my beloved child, remain any longer subject to such misconstructions. I will write; I will reveal every thing; I deserve to lose you; you shall go to your father."

"Oh no, my dear mother," exclaimed Caroline, "I will not leave you; nothing on earth

earth shall persuade your daughter to forsake you. My father has many friends; he is rich and prosperous; you have nothing in the whole universe but me. Can I then forsake you?"

"My love," replied Mrs. Vincent, pressing her hand, "the unwarrantable, the guilty deception I have practised for so many years renders me unworthy of possessing so great a blessing. My former errors may be in part atoned for by the severe repentance I have felt; but this last can alone be expiated by resigning you for ever. You must leave me—Caroline, we must part."

"And can you," said Caroline, "in the present delicate state of your health, think of sending me from you? Do you wish to render your child completely miserable?"

"No, my love," said Mrs. Vincent, wiping off a tear which trembled in her eye;—

"I live only in the hopes of restoring you to that happiness I have been the means of depriving you of: I shall then dedicate the remainder of my days to repentance and prayer; I shall no longer have an interest in this world, and shall depart this life in peace, assured of my Caroline's felicity."

"No earthly power," cried Caroline, clasping her hands, "shall force me to leave you; my dear mother, command it not;—force not your Caroline to an action which she will never cease to lament."

"My ever good, affectionate, and dutiful girl, teach me how to thank you as I ought for your undeviating attention to my happiness; but I cannot reconcile it to my feelings—I cannot answer it to my conscience, to detain you any longer from your generous and worthy lover; and how can I ever hope to be pardoned my offences, if I continue to—
injure

injure the most noble, the most exalted of men?"

"My mother," said Caroline, "did he know your situation, he would command me to stay with you—he would applaud my resolution."

Mrs. Vincent shook her head.—"I have, my child, through life, been the victim of error; yet I will at last retrieve, as much as possible, my guilty conduct: you shall be restored to that fortune you are so qualified to adorn—you shall dignify that station you were born to ornament. You shall leave me, my Caroline, deeply impressed with the remembrance of your goodness—deeply sensible that I am unworthy of so angelic a daughter, and, finally, convinced that no action can bring us peace at the last, unless it has the entire approbation of that internal monitor, whose still small voice will be

G 4

heard

heard sooner or later. I have never, for a moment, been at peace with myself since I detained you; I have continually resolved to restore you to the arms of your father:—yet whenever a favourable opportunity offered, that resolution has wavered; now it is finally determined, you must leave me.”

Our heroine calmly answered, “Then hear me too, my mother, and believe your Caroline while she swears, that if forced to quit you, no power on earth shall compel her ever to become the wife of Frederic Godfrey.”

Mrs. Vincent looked at her daughter;—she almost discredited her senses.

“Caroline,” said she, “we will drop this subject; I am unable to cope with my affectionate daughter;” and, with streaming eyes, she strained her to her maternal bosom, and prayed Heaven to recompense her filial piety.

piety. Caroline wept also; she staid some hours with her mother, and then went out to execute some commissions which had been assigned her by Mrs. Middleton; and in Henrietta Street she had met with the insult before related. She had promised to see her mother again in the afternoon; but she dared not appear before her, convinced she could not conceal the traces of agitation which were so visible on her countenance.—She was, however, resolved to persevere in what she considered her duty, although she saw but too plainly that she had lost the esteem of her lover, and thought that in all probability it would never be in her power to convince him of her innocence:—the ensuing night she was saved from the fire at the hazard of her lover's life.—And now we will return to his chamber. The crisis of the fever was more serious than at first.

the physicians had imagined. Towards evening Frederic awoke out of the sleep in which he had lain some hours, and jumping out of bed, he pushed by his attendants, and quick as lightning rushed down stairs, exclaiming—

“She is dead, destroyed, lost, burnt!” and he sunk senseless on the floor. With difficulty he was conveyed up stairs, where he lay some time in a state of insensibility, from which he awoke only to feel fresh and renovated delirium.”

“Oh!” cried he, “did you not see her? There, there she goes again; her garments are all over gold; a flame follows her; a little angel is her train-bearer; they told me she was drowned, but water would have done her good. Oh! she has set my head all in flames—feel how it burns!—Madness, destruction, death—what art thou? Come,

my love, sit down by me, and we will drink together damnation to Major Mortimer; but no, you love him—then why did you deceive me?—Oh! there is still a little corner in my heart where she triumphs!—Did you not hear her laugh?—But I'll reach her—I'll dig, dig till I find her!"

He then began to tear the bed, and beat himself until entirely exhausted; he again sunk into a stupor, from which he awoke only to terrify those around him by his repeated changes from insensibility to insanity. Fitzmorris now determined to speak to him.

"My dear boy," said he, "how are you?"

"Look," cried Frederic, "how all the graves give up their dead! My father, Oh my father! Caroline too—I saw her last night; she was dressed in a mantle of ether; her head was crowned with roses, and she

smiled upon me. Oh ! it was the smile of an angel.—Then, Oh my God ! I saw not the mantle of ether, but a shroud ; and she called me to her, and she pointed—But I will follow thee, my love, even to the confines of the grave.”

“ It is too much,” cried Fitzmorris, tears streaming down his manly face, “ it is too much ! Almighty Providence, thou who temperest the wind, who stillest the raging tempest—“ who guidest the wandering mariner in safety through the trackless deep,” and he knelt down by the bedside—“ thou who, in thy just judgments, thinkest upon mercy, spare, I beseech thee, if it be thy good pleasure, this sole remaining pledge of my earthly happiness, this dearly beloved son of a much regretted sister !—Behold,” cried he, turning to Mrs. O’Sullivan, “ the pale form despoiled of its manly beauty, the
finews

sinews shrunk with disease, the seat of reason overthrown.—What then is death, whose approach we all fear? What the horrors of the grim tyrant compared to a scene like this? A little time is past, a few short days, and I beheld in him the pillow to sustain my age.—Vain-glorious boaster! I prided myself on being connected with him.”

Fitzmorris now observed that Frederic was in a sound sleep; and sitting down on the side of the bed, he watched every turn of his countenance, and, with the most heart-rending anxiety, awaited that awful change, which he momentarily expected to take place. Dr. D——, having been sent for, now arrived; and having felt the pulse of the patient, he expressed great hopes that this sleep would be beneficial to him.

“Come with me, Mr. Fitzmorris,” said he; “we shall do better without so many people

people in the room. Mrs. O'Sullivan will take care of the invalid. If he sleeps thus soundly," continued he, as they proceeded down stairs, "a few hours, and awakes in a composed state of mind, I shall have no difficulty in pronouncing him out of danger."

At ten o'clock Mrs. O'Sullivan came into the room, with information that Frederic had been awake about half an hour, had taken some refreshment, and that she hoped he was again composed to rest. Mr. Fitzmorris then insisted on taking her place, and with difficulty at length prevailed on her to seek some repose.

The following day Frederic was pronounced out of danger, and continued to mend rapidly; yet so violent had been his malady, that many weeks elapsed ere he was able to leave his room. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered, he gave his uncle
a circum-

a circumstantial account of every thing which had happened prior to his seizure ; and concluded by desiring him to make the shopkeeper atone for his shameful behaviour to Caroline.

Mr. Fitzmorris acquiesced in the propriety of this measure, and the day following he employed a person to set about the business ; but the house was shut up, the man had left London, and no one could tell where he had retreated. Mr. Fitzmorris now persuaded Frederic to leave the metropolis, and to go to the sea-side :—Margate was the place fixed on, and a vessel their conveyance, as Mr. Fitzmorris hoped a short voyage would be of use to his invalid,—Behold them then quietly settled at Margate, where the goddess Hygeia graciously condescended to smile on Frederic, who imagined his sister comfortably settled in
Wales

Wales with Mrs. Dixon (for so Fitzmorris had suffered him to believe), when the following letter, put into his hands by that gentleman, unravelled his mistake, and not a little surprised him, as, till its perusal, he had not had the slightest suspicion of his sister's marriage with Mr. Edwin.

Dublin.

“My dear uncle was amazed, and perhaps angry with his fugitive niece for the rash step she took in quitting his protection, and for the manner in which she left Bath.— Yet spare your reproaches ; for believe me it was neither want of affection nor confidence, but simply a wish to act entirely from circumstances, and without that restraint which any witness of my conduct would have subjected me to. The affection I had for so
many

many years felt for Edwin, and which the most sacred of all ties had not a little contributed to strengthen, left me not a doubt of the path I ought to pursue. I felt that no humiliation was too great when the restoration of his heart was in question; I felt also, that with such a motive every sacrifice was laudable. I feared the rigid dictates of family pride would interfere; and what, alas! is pride when put in competition with the softer emotions of the heart? I had also made some discoveries relative to Edwin's conduct, and these hastened a determination I had long been on the point of forming.— I felt that my love for him was interwoven with my existence, and that the one could only be eradicated by the termination of the other. I knew also that, notwithstanding the errors he might have been guilty of, he possessed an excellent heart, a noble, liberal, and

and generous mind. I knew that I had once reigned sole and entire mistress of the one, and had great influence on the determinations of the other. I reflected that to reproach him with his neglect, might ultimately widen the breach between us ; and how could I write to him without casting some reflections on his long silence, and desertion of me ? The things I had heard to his prejudice might (at least so my fond heart persuaded me) be without foundation ; and being a witness of his conduct, could alone satisfy the anxious heart of conjugal affection. I overcame the natural timidity of my character ; and having fixed my resolution, I prayed to the Almighty to render it prosperous, and awaited with impatience an opportunity of putting it in execution. I was, however, prevented for
some

some time by several untoward circumstances; and most of all by the want of money, that necessary evil. Before now I doubt not you have received information from Wilson of the assistance I received from him in this respect, although he was totally ignorant on what account he became my creditor. And now behold me ready to take my departure with fifty pounds in my pocket. I had information that a vessel lay in the port at Bristol bound for Ireland. I procured a passage in her, and reached her the morning on which she sailed, at a place called Lamplighters' Hall. The wind was fair; we were bound to the port of Dublin. And now was your Emma first launched on the wide ocean of life. She had never before been separated a day from the protecting arms of kind and indulgent relatives; and you will believe me when I assert,

assert, that as the shore gradually receded from us, I felt no little terror at the project I had engaged in ;—it was hazardous ; my little all I had embarked (as I may say) in one venture ; and though determined to persevere, yet I could not but tremble when I reflected on the uncertainty of success, and the perils I had to encounter. Alas ! such are ever the feelings of real affection, “ which doubts, which dreads, which hopes, yet fondly loves.”

“ I was obliged to conduct myself with tenfold caution, to prevent my disguise from being discovered. I was in a man’s habit ; every eye alarmed me, every accidental question agitated and confused me ; I even fancied the surrounding sailors could dive into the recesses of my soul, and perhaps this very fearfulness might be the means of revealing my situation to them ; for as I sat
in

in the cabin, indulging melancholy reflection, I overheard one of the sailors talking to his comrade in the following manner:—

‘D——n my blood, Jack, but I think that fair weather chap in the cabin looks for all the world like a girl; he’s monstrous shy, and so damnation fearful.’

‘By St. Patrick,’ said the other, ‘I only wish to know him to be a girl, I’d soon tip him into water; ’twould wash the Madam out of him, I warrant. I hate such hellish, fair weather locks, and yet I dare swear there’s not a girl, from a bar-maid down to an oyster wench, who would not sniff up her nose at us jolly Tars, and pick up with this dainty son of a b——. Well, well, it isn’t all gold that glitters—he’ll make a fine hand, I warrant, in fighting the French, and be d——d to ’em!’

“You

“ You may imagine, for I cannot describe, my dear uncle, my feelings during this conversation, which was now interrupted by a man vociferating—

‘ Here, you son of a sinner, you Paddy, St. Patrick’s potatoe-merchant, the Captain wants you.’

‘ Hold your tongue, Taffy,’ said another, ‘ or I’ll shave your Welch crown with the top of your own leek,’ and then he began to sing in no very elegant manner—‘ There were three jovial Welchmen.’—His antagonist now whisked a mop at him, which he held in his hand, crying—

‘ Long life to the potatoe, for ’tis meat without bone;’ and away they all clambered upon deck like so many squirrels.

“ It was some time ere I could determine how to conduct myself so as to elude suspicion. At first I resolved to feign illness,

illness, but on reflection I determined to face them out ; and, as our great Poet makes one of his female characters observe—

“ Let in my breast lay hid what woman's fear there will,

“ To have a swashing and a martial outside.”

“ I therefore mounted the deck immediately, and remained there some time, casting now and then a glance of defiance at the man who began the dialogue I had overheard.—

At last—‘ Pat,’ said he to his friend, ‘ I’ll be hanged if that land lubber didn’t hear us just now, he looks so confoundedly crusty.’

“ The undaunted appearance which I put on kept them on their guard, and by degrees my fear subsided. Towards night we made the bay of Dublin, and no tongue can describe my feelings. I was within sight of a country which contained my husband, and which I almost considered as my native land ;

land ; yet I approached it in disguise, as a stranger—as a stranger, perhaps, should visit the spacious domain of my forefathers—I should view the habitation where my respected mother first drew breath, and the hallowed spot where she united herself to my father, the worthiest, the best of men—the tenderest, the most indulgent of parents. Every object was to me interesting, for it brought to my imagination some fancied memorial of those who were lost to me for ever. The beautiful prospect by which the capital is surrounded, the many seats of noblemen and gentlemen which ornament its vicinity, the romantic views which the distant mountains of Wicklow present to the eye, all conspired to harmonize my feelings, and I eagerly panted for the morning, when we should sail up the Liffy, and be landed

landed in safety. I could almost have exclaimed with the Poet—

“ Earth, I salute thee with an holy kiss,

“ Though rebels wound thee with their horses’ hoots.”

CHAP. V.

“ Whaireir he gae, whaireir he ryde,

“ My love with him maun still abyde

“ In weil or wae, whaireir he gae,

“ Mine hart can neir depart him frae.”

Emma's Letter continued.

“ **L**ANDED on the quay, I proceeded, by the recommendation of the Captain, to Sackville Street, where I took lodgings.—I made enquiry of my landlady, in a careless manner, respecting the English regiments at

that time in Dublin. She informed me there were two stationed at the barracks, which were considered the largest and most complete in all Europe.—‘ This,’ thought I, ‘ will afford me a good excuse for inspecting them, and I resolved to discover if Mr. Edwin were with them. The following morning I strolled accidentally into Stephen’s-Green ;—it presented to my view numerous groups of happy faces ; every one seemed enjoying the beauties of nature in a delightful spring morning. I was alone, unknown, and a stranger. No countenance brightened at my approach ; no voice, with accents of pleasure, bade me welcome. I thought of my dear father, who was lost to me for ever ; I thought of my friends in England ; but, more than all, I thought of my husband. A dreadful foreboding came at this instant across my mind as to the
event

event of my pilgrimage, and my heart sunk within me. An Officer at this moment passed me, accompanied by a lady; they appeared in earnest conversation. Something in my person attracted the attention of the latter, and she whispered into the ear of her companion; he looked round. I could not support myself; I caught hold of a railing before one of the houses—it was Mr. Edwin! They turned, and as they again passed me, a beggar held up a petition; it was an earnest supplication for relief. I could not understand the language, but the voice spoke more eloquently than words; nature appeared unable to sustain itself any longer. I put my hand into my pocket—I nodded to the suppliant to approach; I could not stir. The lady was also affected by the distressful tone of the pleader.

‘Go on,’ said she.

“I sighed almost involuntarily; it was the most melodious voice I had ever heard. She walked with ineffable grace towards the poor mendicant.

‘Ah!’ thought I, ‘this cannot be her; so good, so charitable, she must also be virtuous.’

“She pulled off her glove, and displayed (except Miss Vincent’s) the most beautiful arm I ever beheld.”—[Here, gentle reader, Frederic sighed, and was for some moments lost in thought].—“My eyes were earnestly fixed on her face, which she no sooner perceived, than it was suffused with crimson, and her hazle eyes were cast on the ground. The face was, if possible, more lovely than the arm.

‘It is little,’ said she, as she put a shilling into the poor woman’s hand; ‘but,’ and she sighed, ‘I have now little to bestow!’

Her

Her eyes now turned with resignation to a cross affixed to her bosom, and, with the lightness of ether, she joined her companion.

‘Who is that lady, friend?’ said I to the beggar.

“The answer was in Irish; I understood it not.

‘God bless her!’ said I.

“The exclamation was in a language known to all countries, and the poor woman added, ‘God bless her!’

“I walked on; I strove to subdue my feelings. The sight of Edwin could not surprise me—I was in a manner prepared for it; yet my soul became a prey to the most racking apprehensions, the most alarming fears, the most tumultuous emotions. This enchanting female could not be the abandoned profligate I had heard described. Was she then deceived? Had

Edwin been her betrayer? At this idea my heart shuddered; and believe me when I affirm that I formed a resolution at once, and from which nothing on earth could have tempted me to swerve.

‘I can forgive,’ sighed I, ‘a casual lapse from virtue—it may be a failing incidental to humanity; but the deliberate seduction of an innocent and virtuous character is too certain a proof of total depravity, and my soul will for ever recoil from a re-union with a man capable of its perpetration; yet, with all that simplicity of appearance, she may be vicious.’—I sighed again.—‘It will only add one more to the many incongruities of human nature.’

“I felt humbled—I felt degraded in my own estimation.

‘Alas!’ cried I, ‘I have no chance in this rivalry. She is young, beautiful,
highly

highly gifted by Nature, perhaps more highly still by Art. Where then is my hope in this life? What will be the colour of my future destiny?"

"On every side the prospect had a dark and fearful aspect. I returned to Sackville Street; I went to bed; I took no refreshment; rest was a stranger to my pillow—alas! it was strewn with thorns. Towards morning I fell into a disturbed and hurried slumber. Methought the shade of my departed father appeared before me, and reproved my want of confidence in the goodness of the Almighty, and my inattention to his last advice.

'Child of my affection,' said he, 'cease to mourn; cast thy care upon the Lord—he careth for thee. Banish every unquiet apprehension; trust in him, and you shall not be cast down.'

“ The sun, which shone with splendour into my window, awoke me ; I arose, and prayed to the Omnipotent, and gradually grew more composed. Hope again irradiated the prospect ; the darkness vanished ; I went down stairs, and conversed some time with my landlady on indifferent subjects.—I endeavoured to discover if she were worthy of my confidence, for I found it absolutely necessary to repose my secret in some one who could further my plans. She was, I thought, the very character I wanted. She appeared a matronly woman of about fifty, and seemed to have known better days.

‘ Pray,’ said I, ‘ are there any gentlemen’s seats worth seeing in this neighbourhood ? I am told Morris Town is a handsome old-fashioned place.’

‘ Alas !’ cried she, sighing deeply, ‘ it is not the Morris Town I once knew it when inhabited by the father of the present possessor,

feffor, yet it is ftill worth feeing; it has been deserted many years, yet I fhould like once more to behold a place where I have fpent fo many happy days."

"A tear fell upon her hand, but fhe ftrove to conceal this tribute of genuine feeling.

'You are related to the family?' faid I.

'No,' answered fhe; 'I am only the daughter of one of the under tenants. I was waiting-maid to Mifs Emma Fitzmorris, and the only perfon whom the fecond Mrs. Fitzmorris retained in the family after her marriage.'

'Fate has then thrown me,' exclaimed I, 'on the very perfon I wifhed to fee; before you you fee difguifed the daughter of that Emma Fitzmorris.'

'Oh God!' cried Mrs. Butler, ftaining me to her bofom, 'then Heaven has at laft heard my prayer, and I fhall die in peace amongft the descendants of my honoured

Lady; but,' and she retreated two or three paces from me, 'why do I behold you thus disguised?'

"I now revealed to her, in as few words as possible, my situation, and the plan I meant to proceed on, which was to discover the place in which the female associate of my husband resided, and get myself introduced into the family, as, before I determined what course I should pursue, it was necessary I should know what connection subsisted between them. Mrs. Butler proposed going herself in search of the young lady's residence. During her absence I was more agitated than can be imagined; a few weeks, days, hours perhaps, would determine my future fate. I went to the window, and watched for her return. My impatience increased every moment. I took up a book, and attempted to read, but the letters

letters were scarcely discernible, so great was my emotion ; my hand trembled—I could not hold it ; I went again to the window.—

I lifted up the sash, and looked up and down the street—no Mrs. Butler appeared ; but walking in the street, were an Officer and a lady ; it was Edwin, and the same female I had seen the day before. She was habited in the Scotch fashion ; her dress was entirely of plaid ; she looked more lovely than when I first saw her ; an air of melancholy had taken possession of her features, and she appeared to be conversing with interest and energy. At the bottom of the street stood a handsome curricie, attended by servants in the Edwin liveries.—

The lady now entered a house on the opposite side of the way, and soon returning, joined her companion, who, having assisted her into his carriage, followed her in, and

they were quickly out of fight.—‘ Here, then,’ thought I, ‘ is conviction.’—My love was deeply wounded ; my pride suffered still a severer shock. His wife, the humble, despised Emma, had no carriage, no servants, no attendants : she was forsaken, despised, forgotten. I sunk into a chair, and wept bitterly. Mrs. Butler found me in this situation : she entreated me to be patient ; and having reasoned me into some degree of calmness, she informed me that the lady I had seen was the reputed mistress of my husband ; that she lodged in a house in Stephen’s Green, and that her name was O’Niel. Tears were at first my only answer. I felt as if my heart was breaking.—I enquired if Edwin resided in the same house.

‘ His situation,’ said Mrs. Butler, ‘ obliges him to live at the barracks.’

“ I pro-

“ I procured lodgings in Miss O’Niel’s habitation. Mrs. Butler introduced me as the widow of a gentleman lately deceased ; in consequence of which I habited myself as a widow, and in three days the same roof sheltered me and my (as I then thought her) happy rival. I soon found that after a certain time of the day I need not fear encountering my husband ; I also found that he was the only visiter whom Miss O’Niel admitted, and that in general she appeared overwhelmed with deep melancholy. I determined to introduce myself to her the following day, and endeavour so far to controul my feelings as to remain for some time a secret and watchful observer of her conduct ; and if I found she had been deluded by my husband, urge her to a renunciation of him : for though she had swerved in one point from the rigid dictates of virtue, yet I

had no doubt but that she might still retain many generous and noble qualities. I had myself been an eye-witness of her charity.— I found her manners so interesting, her person so prepossessing, her conversation so modest, ingenuous, and refined, that I could not believe it possible she could be the illicit companion of a married man. I apologized for my intrusion. She assured me my visit was an honour, and that she should consider my society a great acquisition.

‘ I live,’ said she, ‘ almost entirely secluded, and the hours appear sometimes as days—so long, so very long does time appear to the miserable. I never used to be sad, even in the most retired and solitary situation ; but I know not how it is—here every one is busied in pleasure, business, or politics, and they have no time to pay attention to the passing stranger. Every
happy

happy countenance gives my heart a pang, for I can no longer smile.'

"I sighed at this representation of her feelings. What a state of mind for a girl scarcely seventeen! I sighed also at the reflection that conscience perhaps pointed the arrow of misery, and the sting was thus doubly envenomed.

'Alas!' cried she, glancing with an eye of pity on my dress, 'this intestine commotion has perhaps been the means of rendering you unhappy. How many widows, how many orphans are there, who have reason to curse those fatal philosophic incendiaries, who have deprived them of all the endearing relatives of life!'

"I now turned the conversation by asking if she would call on me the following day.—She hesitated, blushed, and then said she was generally engaged in the morning.—I sighed; she

she cast on me a look of enquiry, and promised to spend the following afternoon with me. A fortnight passed, every evening of which was spent with Miss O'Niel alternately in each other's apartments; and though I was convinced that she loved Edwin, I was also convinced that she was yet innocent and virtuous.

'What then is Edwin?' thought I. 'Is he, can he be base enough to plan the seduction of an unfortunate girl who is under his protection?'—And I went up stairs with the determined resolution of revealing every thing to Miss O'Niel. I heard the voice of Edwin. I retreated.

'Oh Clara!' cried he, 'my beloved Clara, do not needlessly alarm yourself. I have no doubt of their safety; had any harm happened to them, we should have been informed of it long since.'

"I had

“I had now half a mind to rush into his presence, and to accuse him with his infidelity. I again went up stairs, and again retired precipitately ;—he wished her a good night ; I thought he kissed her hand. I blew out my candle, and concealed myself in a small recess in the staircase ; I dared not even breathe : he sighed as he passed by me.

‘ Ah ! ’ thought I, ‘ that sigh was not for me ; I have long since been banished from his thoughts ; he ceases to remember the vows plighted to me.’

“ As soon as he quitted the house, I left my concealment, and went into the apartment of Miss O’Niel. She was sitting on a sofa ; her head rested on one hand, while she looked unconsciously on the ground, and turned over the leaves of a book without attempting to read.

‘ Miss

‘ Miss O’Niel !’ said I.—She started.—
‘ I fear your brother has brought you some
ill news.’

‘ No,’ said she, ‘ he brought me no ill
news ; he is not my brother.’

‘ No !’ exclaimed I, affecting to be sur-
prised.

‘ He is, I thank God,’ cried she, energe-
tically clasping her hands, ‘ no relation of
mine ; he is dearer to me than——’

“ She recollected herself, and blushed.

‘ He will become your husband ?’ said I,
taking her hand, and attempting to smile.—

‘ Tell me, are you not going to be married ?’

“ She blushed again ; and raising her
sweet eyes to my face, she said—

‘ I think I may venture to trust you ; I
love him, Heaven knows, fondly, ardently,
sincerely love him. I am also convinced
that he returns my affection ; yet he has
never

never told me so, and this is what vexes and alarms me. Often, very often, has he been on the point of revealing his passion, when a sudden recollection has appeared to agitate him ; he has trembled, sighed, and, alas ! not unfrequently wept. I have importuned him in vain for the cause of this emotion, but he evades every explanation ; and this is but one of my many sources of misery.'

' Perhaps,' said I, ' there is some fatal bar to your union.'

' Heaven forbid !' cried she, piously crossing herself.

' Do you know any thing of his family ?' asked I.

' Alas ! no ; to-morrow I will tell you how I became acquainted with him.'

' You are young,' said I ; ' you have seen little of the world ; hear my story, and then judge

judge how much greater my cause for sorrow is than your's. I am not a widow.'—She started.—'I am a wife!'

"I then related my history to her, only concealing my name, and a few particulars, lest the truth broken too abruptly might alarm her.

'I have seen the person whom my faithless husband loves,' continued I; 'she is amiable; she knows not of the tie which binds him to another.'

"Miss O'Niel cast on me a look of terror and apprehension.

'My dear Clara,'—I took her hand—'compose yourself, and calm your apprehensions,'—she almost gasped for breath.—'Exert your fortitude, lovely, generous, noble-minded Miss O'Niel; you are called on for an effort the most exalted, a sacrifice
the

the most painful, but one which will ultimately redound to your honour; Mr. Edwin is——’

‘Married!’ cried she, and sunk senseless on the floor. I rung the bell, and, with the assistance of the servants, soon recovered her senses; but it was long before I succeeded in calming the agitation of her mind, and she several times relapsed into a state of insensibility. I sat by her bed-side the whole night; and having administered a composing draught, recommended by a person of the Faculty, I had the pleasure to find it take effect, for she sunk into a profound slumber, in which she remained until morning.

‘How good you are,’ cried she, ‘to sit by me! I am sure I would not have injured you for the world. Heaven knows that Clara O’Niel never, even in thought,
served

swerved from the dictates of virtue. Would to God I had but known that Mr. Edwin was married !'

'You are a good girl, Clara,' said I ;—
'yet suffer me to ask you one question.—
How came you to be so entirely unacquainted with the world as to remain under the entire and sole protection of a young man ?'

'I had no where to go,' replied she, deeply blushing ; 'and as I hoped we should be united to each other, and as we did not reside in the same house, I,'—she hesitated—'I—~~I~~ thought the opinion of the misjudging multitude nothing when placed in competition with my happiness ; but be satisfied, dear Madam—I will see him no more.'

'Pardon me, dear Miss O'Niel, if I make one observation ; you no doubt will see its justice.

justice. The innocent and virtuous should never suffer their conduct to have the appearance of impropriety; for from what can the world in general judge but from appearances? Yet, my gentle Clara, I wish you to remain in my house, and under my protection.'

"She looked at me with surprise evidently marked on her countenance.

'It will silence,' continued I, 'the insinuations of the malevolent; and where can you go with propriety?'

'Where indeed!' rejoined she, with a deep sigh.—'But with your leave I will relate to you my history.'

'You will oblige me; but first take your breakfast.'

"Having drank a cup of chocolate, she began her narration in the following manner:—

'Myself

Myself and two brothers, who are twins, are the sole, though illegitimate offspring of Mr. O'Niel. Until within these few years, we resided in Scotland, as the Castle of O'Niel was then in possession of my father's elder brother, who dying without male issue, it devolved to him. It was many years after the decease of Lionel O'Niel ere we came to inhabit the family mansion. My father had contracted a disgust against it, in consequence of a disagreement which formerly subsisted between him and his brother when the only and discarded daughter of my uncle went to reside in England: I never saw her. At the breaking out of the rebellion in this country, we lived in splendour in the Castle of O'Niel, and had revived, in a great measure, the ancient hospitality of our country. Our domains were fertile, our family happy; my father loved

us all with tenderness, but he doted on his Clara; my brothers also strove to outvie each other in fondness for me. They are only one year older than myself. Lionel O'Niel is a prodigy of manly beauty. Henry, though not so handsome, is equally engaging. They both enrolled themselves in one of the corps formed for defending their country. Born, bred, and educated as we were in solitude, our affections insensibly settled on each other, and were cemented beyond that of most families, and beyond that usually experienced by brothers and sisters. My father soon became a mark at which rebellion pointed its envenomed shafts. Our castle was besieged; he resolved to maintain it to the last, and either to preserve it, or to die in its defence. To my brother Lionel he confided the secret repository, where papers of consequence

were concealed, and then he commanded him to bear his Clara to Dublin, and return with all possible speed to his assistance. We were intercepted, taken, and, I doubt not, should have been slain, had not your generous husband fortunately come to our rescue. My brother confided me to his protection, and returned to the Castle of O'Niel; it was no longer tenable for my father; they were all taken; and Oh God! do I live to relate my father was butchered in cold blood!— This is only one of the many crimes daily perpetrated by the philosophers of the present day. Vain and empty pretenders to universal philanthropy! for though executed by the undiscerning and misguided multitude, their heads were the complotters of the desolation, their hearts alone the contrivers of this massacre of thousands! More than a twelvemonth is passed, and I have
heard

heard no tidings of my brothers. With the tenderest compassion has Mr. Edwin endeavoured to allay my grief, and sympathized with me. For your sake, my gentle, my amiable friend, I hope his sympathy extended no farther than compassion.'

"She then piously crossed her white arms on her bosom, and breathed a fervent prayer for my happiness. I pressed her to my heart with an almost sisterly affection, and we conversed some time on her future prospects.

'My dear Clara,' said I, 'you shall go with me to England.'

'No,' cried she, 'I will not again throw myself in the way of Mr. Edwin; I cannot, I will not see him any more.'

'Without your kind assistance, Clara,' said I, 'I fear we shall never be re-united.—Perhaps Edwin will impute your absence to

the narrow suspicions of his Emma ; compose your mind, I entreat you, and meet him this once. Perhaps you will not find the task so difficult as you may imagine ;— he is yet ignorant of your partiality ; he shall never know it from me.’

“ The sweet girl, blushing as she spoke, replied—

‘ Well, Madam, if it will be any gratification to you, I will see him ; I will reproach him with his concealment ; I will accuse him of his infidelity.’

‘ My dear girl, let me only see you composed ; promise me you will endeavour to calm the agitation of your mind, and I doubt not but that you will be ultimately successful. Believe me it is not so difficult to controul your feelings as you imagine ;— that inherent sense of right, implanted by
Providence

Providence in your breast, will aid your exertions, and I shall see you soon as indifferent to Mr. Edwin as I can wish you to be.'

"Clara now promised to do every thing I desired, and she prepared to meet Edwin with at least an appearance of indifference. Although she had, as we both fancied, gained that happy temper of mind so much to be desired, yet his arrival again threw her into a tremor, and it was some time before she could compose her agitation sufficiently to go down stairs to him. He appeared both surprised and alarmed at her evident imbecility, and, with a voice of the tenderest concern, entreated her to send for medical advice. The interest of his manner threw her entirely off her guard, and she replied, with some asperity—

'I thank God I have received the most salutary and beneficial advice; I thank God

I have discovered the impropriety of my present situation, and at last am sensible of the light in which our intimacy is considered by the world. Mr. Edwin, I sincerely thank you for your protection; and should still have had greater cause for gratitude, had you sanctioned my conduct by introducing me to your family, by claiming for me the protection of Mrs. Edwin.'

'I see,' cried Edwin, 'I have lost your esteem; and yet, Clara, believe me I intended not to deceive you: I have long wished to explain to you my situation, yet God only knows how much I have dreaded its effects. It is true I am married, fatally married, ruined, blasted, undone. If you knew half the misery which it has brought on me, you would pity me.'

"I had heard enough; I sunk into a fit of insensibility on a chair; I had concealed myself

myself in a closet adjoining. I however still could hear Edwin walking about the room in manifest disorder.

‘Have you any thing more to charge me with, Clara?’ said he.

‘Why was concealment requisite?’ asked she.

‘Because I feared to lose you; because I love, I dote on you to distraction.’

“Here Clara was in her turn affected, yet she answered with some spirit—

‘You profess, Mr. Edwin, to love me, yet without compunction have you permitted me to reside under your protection, and be considered by the world as the illicit companion of a married man. And Mrs. Edwin is all this time forsaken;—was she not the woman of your choice?’

‘She was,’ cried he, clasping his hands,
‘the sole idol of my affections, the most
14 beloved,

beloved, adored of women ; she was dearer to my fond heart than the vital blood which warms it. Her countenance was fascinating, lovely, and beautiful, and I foolishly thought ingenuous ; but I have banished her from my thoughts for ever !

‘ And what,’ asked the generous girl, ‘ has she done to merit this treatment ?— How can she have offended you since your separation ? I fear, Mr. Edwin, that you have eagerly sought an excuse for your own frailty by recrimination.’

‘ Miss O’Niel,’ said he, in a voice and tone expressive of the most poignant agony, ‘ do not probe too deeply this already lacerated bosom. Mrs. Edwin can never be re-united to me ; the utmost extent of earthly fondness can never pardon her offence ; it is recorded in legible characters in this

this once idolizing heart—it places an indelible stain on the heretofore un sullied name of Edwin. Even now she openly lives with a man of the name of Sandford, who passes for her uncle.’

‘And yet, Mr. Edwin,’ said Clara, ‘it is improbable, had all this been true, that she would have left her family, and travelled, alone and unprotected, to this hostile country.’

“Edwin looked at her with astonishment.

‘It is impossible,’ cried he, ‘she cannot be here; she has long ceased to regret the unfortunate Edwin. Oh Heaven! could I but for a moment believe it, it were happiness, it were joy beyond the hope of mortality!’

‘It is indeed true,’ exclaimed I, advancing, and throwing myself at his feet; ‘I

am your wife, your true and loyal wife ;— look at me ; view me for a moment, and believe me faithless if you can.’

“ He turned his face from me to conceal his emotion and shame.

‘ Alas !’ cried I, ‘ you love me no longer, and the conviction of my continued regard is altogether unnecessary to your happiness.’

“ Clara had by this time quitted the apartment.

‘ Oh my dear George !’ and I turned from him, ‘ I will then return to England, and in the bosom of kind and indulgent relatives, and in the consciousness of rectitude, find comfort.’

‘ Yes,’ cried he, ‘ in the consoling arms of Mr. Sandford, in the renunciation of the matronly character of a wife !’

‘ I will

‘I will not,’ said I, ‘retaliate; I can easily convince you that Mr. Sandford is my uncle;—his real name is Fitzmorris; he is the only brother of my lamented mother, and a native of this kingdom. In this very city resides a person who witnessed the marriage of my mother, and the family seat of Morris Town is only five miles distant, the steward of which can convince you that Sandford and Fitzmorris are one.’

“He fell at my feet, and implored my pardon.

‘I am convinced, Emma,’ said he.

“You may guess, my dear uncle, what followed. And now behold your Emma once more arrived at the wished-for haven of rest. Edwin has made a full confession of his errors, and, in his own defence, has given me the enclosed letter, which I apprehend must have been written by Miss

Groves. Clara has promised to remain with me until she can gain some certain tidings of her brothers. Adieu for the present ! I hope soon to meet you all in England, when we will together rejoice at the fortunate termination of my Quixotic expedition.—Remember me to Mrs. Dixon, and comfort my beloved Frederic with the sympathy he meets from his affectionate sister. Alas ! no misfortune is more severely felt than a disappointment of the heart. Once more farewell, says your now happy niece,

“ E. EDWIN.”

Enclosed was the following letter :—

“ A friend of his family informs Mr. Edwin that since he has quitted England, Miss Godfrey is gone to reside entirely with

Mr. Sandford, whom she palms on the world for her uncle, and that she plainly entertains an ardent affection for this quondam uncle.

“ANONYMOUS.”

What comments Frederic made on this letter are unknown; he put it immediately into his pocket, and finding Mr. Fitzmorris had been gone some time to take his morning ride, he strolled down to the pier head, and seating himself, he viewed, with careless eye, the vast influx of people who were disembarking from a vessel just arrived from the metropolis; and had he been disposed for mirth, he might have found an infinity of diversion in the numerous odd visages which successively presented themselves to his view. But his thoughts had wandered from the scenes before him, to those which
nothing

nothing could efface from his memory. In imagination he retraced his former happiness, and contrasted the ideal felicity he had so warmly anticipated, with his present gloomy prospects. A group of figures passed unnoticed, when a female voice suddenly attracted his attention : he started ;— her face was concealed by a deep muslin veil, but the contour of her person persuaded him she could be only Caroline.— Leaning on her arm was a lady, who, he fancied, was Mrs. Vincent. Her appearance denoted the extreme feebleness of her frame ; her legs tottered, and seemed scarcely able to support the emaciated body under which they moved. Near them was a lady whom he immediately recognized for Mrs. Middleton ; and the rear was brought up by a short tradesman-like person, and a young

young lady, who he supposed were Mr. Middleton and his daughter.

"I thank God," cried Mrs. Middleton, "we are here at last, bag and baggage; I never will go in one of them there boys again as long as I live—I am stewed to death!"

"You look, Madam," said a buck of a West Indian, "very much like a delicate dish of callipee.—Here we have you indeed—the whole family, flowers, and shrubs, and the finest sprigs of London pride I ever saw," casting a satirical glance at her straw bonnet, trimmed with those flowers.

Mr. Middleton instantly comprehended the pertness of this speech, and replied, with some virulence—

"We have also the sharp pungency of the tamarind, and a little spice of Jamaica pepper;

pepper; and if the sugar-cane were manfully exerted, I have no doubt but it would crop some of the coxcombs who frequent bathing-places."

"Very facetious, 'pon honour," said the planter, coolly taking a pinch of snuff, and at the same time displaying a diamond ring; "and d——n me you are a hearty old genius, and I should like to be better acquainted with you."

"I am not fond of new acquaintance," said Middleton.

"Please yourself, my old boy," returned the beau, shrugging up his shoulders, and walking off; "please yourself, that's your fort!"

"I never saw so much pride and impertinence in all my life," said Mrs. Middleton,

"as belongs to them there West Indians.—

When they used to come to our house to
dispose

dispose of their goods, they'd be civil enough; but only meet 'em again, and they'd look as if they were quite ashamed to speak to ye:—now I'm always the same; I never sniffs up my nose to-day, and be all easy and agreeable to-morrow. I believe my worst enemy can't say as how I was ever unpolite to 'em; and now we are gone out of trade, and are genteel people, why I'll give every one their own, for good is good, let who will say nay."

"You should not say 'since we went out of trade,' my dear; but you should say, 'since the fire sold our stock off, *at and under prime cost*;' for you know you were always famous for buying in that way."

"Come, none of your jokes," said Mrs. Middleton, smiling; "you are always *twitting* me with my bargains."

ALL

All this time the invalid and her companion quietly pursued their way, and Frederic saw them enter ready furnished lodgings, and was soon convinced that it was indeed Caroline. His heart palpitated, his whole frame trembled.

“How vain,” sighed he, “is every attempt to banish from my memory one who, by a kind of fatality, is every where presented to my view! Only in the stillness of the tomb can Caroline be forgotten—only in the silent grave shall this heart cease to beat with affection towards her!”

He returned home, overwhelmed with melancholy, and a prey to the most gloomy reflections. Several days elapsed, and he saw her not; vainly he pursued her to every place of amusement and pleasure; Caroline was not among the gay. Frederic knew the source of his own inquietude; for though every

every succeeding interview more deeply convinced him of her frailty—though he was more wretched after every succeeding meeting, he yet longed to see her, and dwelt with fondness on every grace which he had fancied she possessed ; and while convinced she was lost to him for ever, he yet haunted every spot where he thought chance might again present her to his view. He strolled into a Circulating Library, furnished from the Minerva (for where, in these enlightened days, is there a bathing-place without such a necessary receptacle of literary knowledge?), and taking up accidentally a volume of Sermons, a bit of paper dropped to the ground. He picked it up—it was the hand-writing of Caroline ; and hurrying out of the shop, he slid it into his pocket, as if fearful of being detected in concealing a treasure. At the door he encountered—gracious Powers !—

Caroline

Caroline herself. He slightly touched his hat to her; she attempted to curtsy, but was obliged to catch hold of the door post, to prevent falling. Neither spoke.—In a few moments Frederic reached home, and hastening to his own apartment, found the paper contained the following lines:—

“ In misery sad why sinks the soul ?

“ Will hope ne’er beam again ?

“ Say, cannot peace with smile console,

“ And cheer the distant scene ?

“ The morning dawn of early youth

“ Has bloom’d, but bloom’d to fade,

“ And all that promis’d love and truth,

“ Is vanish’d into shade !

“ Sad is my soul—a parent’s tears,

“ In ceaseless misery, flow,

“ And fill this anxious heart with fears,

“ This breast with bitter woe !

“ I see

- “ I see her sinking to the grave,
“ I mark her slow decline ;
“ In vain the arm’s stretch’d out to save,
“ Yet let me not repine.
- “ Though sorrow fills my breast with care,
“ Bids anguish heave the sigh ;
“ Though fond regret still sheds the tear,
“ Yet those we love, must die !
- “ Mine is the loss, but her’s the gain—
“ Life has no joys for her ;
“ Death is a calm retreat from pain,
“ From sorrow, and despair.
- “ What is the world ? A source of woe.
“ What human life ? A span.
“ From scenes of care to joy we go,
“ Then what is death to man ?
- “ What but a silent, friendly shore,
“ Where tempests never beat—
“ Where mercy shines in endless store,
“ Where choirs of angels greet !”—
-

“ And

“And are these,” cried Frederic, as he put down the paper, “the sentiments of a depraved and immoral character? Impossible;” and he partly reasoned himself into a belief (though contrary to conviction) that Caroline was still virtuous, when accidentally glancing his eyes towards the window, they encountered the figure of Major Mortimer, and all the fairy visions his fancy had been portraying, were instantly put to flight, and the enigma of Caroline’s being at Margate was as instantly solved. He sighed, and finally determined to think of her no more; but this final determination would not, it is probable, have lasted many moments, had not his uncle entered his apartment, and put into his hand a packet from Ireland, which had been forwarded to him from Bath. He read as follows:—

TO MR. FITZMORRIS.

“ I am more unhappy than can be imagined, at being obliged to become the communicator of disagreeable intelligence ; but Mrs. Edwin, Sir, is unable to write to you herself, and the subject is one on which she will not be able to enter for some time.— Alas ! she who lately congratulated herself and you on her restoration to happiness, is now reduced to a state of distress the most poignant, and perhaps rendered miserable for ever !—But let me endeavour to be methodical. Two days after your niece wrote to you, Mr. Edwin was ordered to join a party detached in pursuit of the rebels encamped on Vinegar Hill. You may conceive how this mandate alarmed his wife and myself ; the former would not be persuaded to remain in Dublin during his absence ; and as
the

the route of her husband lay by Morris Town, she resolved to go there under his escort, and remain there until he returned. I accompanied her; the separation was affecting. Mr. Edwin endeavoured to persuade her that he was not going on a service of danger. Alas! the journey to Morris Town convinced us of the contrary; for though only five miles distant from the metropolis, we met with a severe skirmishing on the road. Mr. Edwin left us a prey to the most racking apprehensions. We had every day fresh accounts from those who fled from the savage brutality of the rebels, and each succeeding report was but an accumulation of horrors. The days were spent in anxiety; night brought us no repose.— Alas! I had been before this a severe sufferer from the intestine commotions of my country; every face presented to my view
the

the image of a concealed assassin; every noise, every accidental circumstance agitated me. The town of Enescorthy was taken by the Loyalists, and from it Mr. Edwin dispatched a messenger with an account of his safety. The rebels were all routed, and obliged to make a precipitate retreat from Vinegar Hill; yet Mr. Edwin was still in pursuit of them, and consequently we had still reason for alarm.

“About a fortnight after our arrival at Morris Town, a man rode hastily into the court, and having conversed some time with the steward, he quitted it again without alighting. We were immediately hurried off to Dublin, without having time allowed us to put on our hats or cloaks, as an attack was apprehended every moment by a party of Croppies. Mrs. Edwin’s strength failed at the end of the second mile, and we sat
VOL. II. K down

down by the side of a hedge, awaiting, in anxiety, the event of all our sufferings, which we thought were now nearly terminated.— A charitable dragoon at this instant passed us, and taking up one behind, and the other of us before him, we proceeded in safety to our journey's end.

“ The fatigue and agitation Mrs. Edwin had endured rendered her extremely ill ;— and, to add to her misery, the following day Mr. Edwin was brought to us on a litter, having lost a leg in a skirmish of the Seven Churches. This sight threw Mrs. Edwin into convulsions, and it was many days before she could be pronounced out of danger. She is now, I thank God, in a state of convalescence. Mr. Edwin is also as well as we can reasonably expect, and talks frequently of returning to England, and devoting the remnant of his days to retirement, and a small

small domestic circle. It is in these trying situations that the character of Mrs. Edwin shines to the greatest advantage; for in these are displayed the native goodness of her heart, and her uniform reliance on the mercy of Providence.

‘ I thank God, my dear Clara,’ said she, ‘ he has spared my Edwin’s life. What is the loss of a limb in comparison with the preservation of his existence? Though the shock was severe, yet I acknowledge that bounty which has not afflicted me above my strength.’—Mrs. Edwin cannot yet go down stairs; Mr. Edwin is confined to his bed; he congratulates himself in a philosophic manner on his misfortune.

‘ I am,’ says he, ‘ heartily tired of this service, and shall be glad to purchase my resignation with the loss of a leg. It is not here like fighting the battles of one’s country

in foreign lands—it is waging war with a violent and tumultuous rabble; the secret assassin smiles in your face, while in his heart he is plotting your destruction. The successes we have lately experienced, I doubt not, must subdue them; and if they are prevented from gaining fresh head, the remnant of these madmen will be too weak to effect any considerable injury.—As soon as we are well enough,’ continued he, ‘we will leave this country. If I could hope that Godfrey would come to escort us, how happy would it make me!’

“ I am come to the conclusion of my paper, and have till then postponed the request this letter was meant to urge. I will flatter myself we shall not be disappointed in that hope. I remain

Your obliged humble servant,

“ CLARA O’NIEL.

“ P. S.

“P. S.— Will you kindly put an advertisement into the London papers for a person of the name of Dixon, formerly Helen O’Niel, and now sole heiress to the O’Niel estate?”

CHAP. VI.

“ Little native of the skies,

“ Lovely penitent, arise ;

“ Calm thy bosom, cheer thy brow,

“ Virtue is thy sister now.

“ Pass the world, and what’s behind ?

“ Virtue’s gold, by fire refin’d ;

“ From an universe depriv’d,

“ From the wreck of Nature sav’d.”

FREDERIC found, by Miss O’Niel’s letter, that Mr. Fitzmorris had concealed the former one from his sister for some time,

as it was dated a great while prior to that now before him. He soon, however, determined to wait on Mrs. Dixon, and if he found her inclinable, to be her escort to Ireland; but in case she should refuse to take the journey, he intended himself to proceed by the shortest route to Milford, and journey alone:—and now that he had fixed to quit Margate, he informed his uncle of their vicinity to Caroline, and his wish that he would, if possible, prevail on her to give up her connection with Major Mortimer.—“For,” continued he, “I have not a doubt now remaining, as I have this morning again seen him, and have every reason to suppose that he followed her to Margate with her own consent; indeed such a combination of circumstances cannot entirely be the effect of chance.”

Mr.

Mr. Fitzmorris agreed in this opinion, and promised to use his endeavours to persuade Caroline to renounce so abandoned a way of life ; and on the following morning Frederic departed for Wales. We shall leave him for the present, and give the reader some account of the Middletons, and why they so unexpectedly came to Margate.

Mr. Middleton resolved, after he had sustained so severe a loss by fire, not to embark again in the fluctuation of trade ; and having still a considerable capital secured in the Stocks, he fixed on retiring for the Summer months to a bathing-place, and to meditate leisurely on future plans. This scheme met with his wife's most sincere acquiescence ; and as the expence of retaining Caroline in the family was now considered too great, they hinted to her, in gentle

K 4

terms,

terms, their resolution, accompanying it with an invitation, both to her and her mother, to join their party to Margate, and desiring that Caroline would remain with them until she could suit herself in another situation.

Caroline gladly acceded to this proposal, in hopes the change of air would be beneficial to her parent; and, on the following week, they set out for Margate, accompanied by Mrs. Jenny, who was still in the pay of the Major, and of course informed him of all their movements. She had now an additional motive for pleasing this military hero, as he had long since discovered her *companionable qualities*; and never being in the habit of restraining his passions, or resisting temptation, he had dispatched honest John into Wales on necessary and important business; and Mrs. Jenny consoled herself with

with thinking that the fortune the Major had promised her would infallibly cover, in the eyes of her lover, any little flaw which might attach to her reputation. The Major now therefore had become the successful rival of his man John, who, though unwilling to leave his love, yet, like a good soldier, dared not disobey his Commanding Officer.

Caroline could not acquaint her mother with her rencontre with Frederic, for she dreaded to alarm or agitate her ; she dreaded still more lest she should accidentally discover their vicinity to him and Fitzmorris : but this fear she soon found was vain and futile, as Mrs. Vincent grew so ill the day after as to be unable to leave the house, or even her own apartment. Every idea was now banished, every thought turned to

anxiety for her mother, and every revolving day produced an alteration—every revolving day convinced Caroline that her loss was inevitable. They were never alone together even for a moment, but Mrs. Vincent would enter on the subject of restoring Caroline to her father, which, having finally determined on in her own mind, she waited only a favourable opportunity to execute.

“My dear Caroline,” said she, when her daughter again attempted to argue the point with her, “no consideration on earth shall tempt me to swerve from that line of conduct my conscience tells me I ought long since to have pursued. Alas! I am unworthy of your affectionate attention—I am wholly undeserving of such a child.—Oh my Caroline! many women may weakly urge, in extenuation of their misconduct, domestic unhappiness and the inconstancy

of their husbands; but I have not even a shadow of a charge to adduce in my defence. Your father was the tenderest of parents, the kindest husband, the best of men!—In no situation will a crime like mine admit of palliation. Recrimination could not exonerate me; but I have nothing to recriminate. Ah! can I then reflect on my conduct without horror? A thousand and a thousand times I behold him in “my mind’s eye:” I see his manly, open, and intelligent countenance beaming with love and universal benevolence: I see him, as I have reason to believe him at present, despoiled of all that can render life desirable. My heart accuses me of being the primary author of all his miseries, of blasting the bright promise of his youth, of strewing thorns on the pillow of his maturity, and ultimately bringing on a premature old age.

To the Almighty who sees the heart—the sincerity of my repentance, and the mercy of my Redeemer, may indeed bid me look forward with hope; for hath he not said,—
‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden?’ But to him whom I have offended on earth, nothing can encourage me to cast my eyes: I dare not approach him; he cannot trace the secret recesses of the soul. Repentance will not efface the indelible stain affixed to his name; the Almighty alone readeth the heart. Believe me, my child, that no present pleasure can compensate to us for the pangs of an agonized conscience. The very best, at the awful close of their existence, have numberless errors and sins to lament. What then has your wretched parent? Oh Caroline! Caroline! pray for me; the hand of the
Lord

Lord is upon me ; a little while ; and I shall be numbered with the dead !”

Caroline left the room to conceal her emotion ; and, on her return, Mrs. Vincent, unwilling further to distress her, changed the conversation. As an almost last resource, the physician who attended Mrs. Vincent, ordered her ass's milk ; and the following morning Caroline walked to a farm-house, a mile distant from Margate, in hopes of procuring some. During her absence, Mrs. Vincent wrote several letters, none of which appeared to please her. At length, however, she folded one of them ; and having put it into her pocket, she sat down in a window which fronted the street, and was for some time lost in reflection. A voice underneath the window awakened her from her reverie ; she started, she gasped for breath ; a figure stood before her which called

called every dormant faculty into action ;— her whole frame quivered from the violence of contending emotions ; her emaciated form could not support her ; she sunk senseless on the ground ! After some time she recovered her recollection ; but the voice was still heard, the form was still visible ; she leaned on the window—she almost doubted her senses ; she took the letter from her pocket, looked at the superscription ; she pressed it to her lips ; and having retired a few paces, she fell on her knees, and exclaimed—

“ All-merciful and gracious Providence, the strength of all those who trust in thee— thou who refreshest the wandering traveller in this world of care—thou who alone canst penetrate the secret recesses of all hearts, fortify my mind to bear the inflictions of
thy

thy justice, and support me in this last conflict, this more than human trial !”

And now behold her seated in an arm-chair, her form wasted by disease, the livid hue of death on her brow—no remnant remaining of the beauty she once so eminently possessed :—no longer did the eye sparkle with liquid lustre ; no longer did the lily and carnation triumph in her cheek ; sickness had untimely cropped the flowers of youth ; sorrow had blasted the maturity of her life ; and repentance, bitter and severe, now threatened to sink her to the grave ere half her days were numbered. She was now only forty years of age. The hectic of her cheek had increased to a crimson, the fluttering of her pulse to a fever, her heart palpitated, and she was scarcely able to breathe from her tremulous agitation. Caroline found her in this situation.

“ Good

“ Good God !” cried she, as she entered,
“ my dear mother, what ails you, and why
do I behold you in this dreadful state ?”

Alas ! her heart fatally presaged the truth ;
she had herself seen her father, and had felt
no little concern at the idea that she who
longed to throw herself at his feet, to express
her affection, and demand his blessing, should
be obliged to pass him, without notice, as a
casual and disinterested stranger.

“ I have seen him, my Caroline,” replied
Mrs. Vincent, “ I have seen your father,
the worthy, the good, the much-injured——”
[She could not pronounce his name]—“ And
never again will I rest until he knows every
thing. Oh God ! what an alteration have
time and misfortune made in his manly
countenance ! Yet I could not be deceived ;
my heart acknowledged his voice, my whole
frame

frame quivered with convulsive agony at his dreaded presence !”

Caroline could not speak ;—she burst into tears ; and having given vent to the feelings which had almost overwhelmed her, she endeavoured to prevail on her mother to calm her emotion, and wait till the succeeding morning. No entreaty, however, could persuade her any longer to defer an explanation which she thought Providence had approved, by her husband’s having been so fortuitously thrown in her way ; and a note was dispatched in search of him, at the request of a sick person, who could not die in peace until she had seen him. The servant returned not for some time ; every moment of suspense increased Mrs. Vincent’s agitation ; Caroline could, with great difficulty, keep her from fainting. At length

word

word was brought that the gentleman was come, and waited in the parlour.

"I cannot leave you, my mother," cried Caroline; "I cannot quit you in this state of alarm and terror."

"My love," said Mrs. Vincent, struggling to conceal her agony, "I am better, much better; after this one effort, I feel I shall be more composed; I wish to see him alone. God bless you, my love! Angels guard and preserve you for your filial affection!" and she pressed her to her bosom with more than maternal tenderness. Caroline now reluctantly left her, and descended the stairs; but unable to compose herself, she sent a servant with a message, and desired her to conduct the gentleman to her mother. The sound of footsteps increased the palpitation of Mrs. Vincent's heart; "the pulse fluttered, stopped, then went on, then
stopped

stopped again!"—Mr. Fitzmorris entered the room; he approached the arm-chair, in which sat a female form;—she arose not at his entrance;—he proceeded; her back was towards him; he stood before her; but who shall speak his horror, his astonishment, at beholding his once beloved Caroline in the emaciated frame before him?—He could not speak; he took her shrivelled hand; it was clammy, cold, and deathlike; the eyes were shut; the hand dropped lifeless from between his; the soul had fled its earthly tenement—Mrs. Fitzmorris was no more! Forgetting, in that moment, every thing but the ardent and unceasing love he had ever borne her, Fitzmorris pressed her breathless form to his bosom in speechless agony, and called on her to awake to sense and recollection.

"Caroline,"

"Caroline," cried he, "my beloved, my adored Caroline, your faults are all forgotten, and the arms of your Fitzmorris shall again be your protection. Speak, tell me you yet live; only wave your hand to convince me of your recollection."

His Caroline heard him not.

"By all your hopes of Heaven," cried he, "by every human tie—by the long years of misery I have had to encounter—by the indelible, the sincere, the disinterested affection I have ever felt for you—I conjure you to speak, and ease this lacerated bosom, this agonized, this bursting heart!"

Alas! no longer was the voice heard by her to whom it was addressed. What a sight for one whose tenderness, in spite of the injuries he had received, still remained, who, through the long vicissitude of nineteen years of misery, had never, for a moment,

moment, forgotten the charms, the beauty which won his youthful affection! He continued to lament over his lost Caroline, until, totally exhausted by his own energy, he sunk senseless on the ground. Our heroine, extremely anxious to know the effect of this meeting on her mother, and alarmed at the length of time which had elapsed since Fitzmorris had been shewn up stairs, now ventured to go into the room. What a scene did she behold, what a sight was here for her gentle and affectionate heart! Her mother, to all appearance, lifeless, and her father in a state little short of insensibility! Affright, anguish, and a combination of feelings too great for words, for some moments took possession of her mind. She could not speak, she could not think, she shed no tears; and, statue like, her senses appeared all frozen up and dormant, until
aroused

aroused to the recollection that, by exertion only could she recover these valued relatives. She hastened to the bell; she rung it violently; it brought the greater part of the family to her assistance. Medical aid was soon procured, and, in strenuous efforts for the restoration of those most dear, Caroline, for some time, lost the sense of misery. And here it was that her character shone forth in its native splendour; here was a young woman scarcely twenty, displaying at once the utmost effort of female fortitude and resignation, and the genuine and uncorrupted sensibility of her nature. Her distress, though poignant and severe, was repressed by the consciousness of the injury it might ultimately do to those whom she would willingly have died to restore: and called on as she was to action, she endeavoured to banish every selfish and useless regret;

regret ; and checking the natural softness of her nature, she became a most effectual assistant in the melancholy room. Mr. Fitzmorris was soon restored to his senses, and conveyed to bed, but no relief could be afforded his hapless wife—she was gone for ever ! Alas ! from the sleep of the grave there was no restoration !—And here it may be proper to hope, that however she might have erred, her repentance, bitter and severe—her sorrow, her sufferings, and her untimely end, might in some degree plead at the throne of the Omnipotent for her pardon. And let me warn my fair countrywomen against the dreadful, and, I am sorry to add, prevalent vices of these times, and at the same time assure them that I mean not, by any thing I have advanced in the foregoing sheets, to extenuate the crime of Mrs. Fitzmorris. Even the worst have
their

their bright fides ; and those whose guilt, like her's, has been flagrant and atrocious, may yet possess some good qualities. Her passions, naturally ardent, and unchecked by the precepts of religion—her heart early impressed with an attachment to Egerton, she was assailed by strong temptation. Religion alone could have supported her falling virtue:—alas ! Caroline Marchmont had never been conversant with its charms ; and she consequently fell, never in this world to rise again ! Despoiled of fame, of affluence, of the countenance of mankind, of the silent approbation of her own heart, and overwhelmed at the calamitous death of Egerton, she awoke to a proper, a just sense of her own guilt ; yet even then she brought “ not forth fruits worthy of repentance :” by detaining Caroline from her father, and leaving him in a deception respecting her, she increased

increased the heinousness of her offences.— Her awful close we will, however, hope atoned for all ; and let us suffer the silent tomb to bury the remembrance of the offence and the offender.

Mrs. Middleton in vain attempted to persuade Caroline to leave this melancholy scene : no entreaties could prevail on her to quit the remains of her mother, except to attend the sick chamber of Mr. Fitzmorris.

“ Would to God,” cried she, “ I had never left her ! Would to God that her Caroline had been permitted to attend her last moments ! Heaven receive her, and restore my dear father to health and serenity !”

On Caroline’s next attempt to enter the chamber of Mr. Fitzmorris, she was informed by Wilton that his master had given orders to him not to permit any one to approach him, and therefore she must not see him.

“I will sit by the bed-side,” cried she ;
“I will not speak ; surely he could not mean those orders should extend to me.”

“Pardon me, Madam,” replied Wilson ;
“the command was positive, and I dare not disobey.”

“He knows my connection with the——”

“He knows every thing,” returned Wilson, interrupting her.—“My dear young lady, I mean not to offend you, but my master has particularly desired that he may not again see you.”

“Then Heaven help me !” said Caroline, meekly ; “for, alas ! I have no friend left on earth. I have lost every hope !” and she hurried to the apartment which contained the remains of her lamented parent ; and throwing herself by the bed-side, she exclaimed—

“Oh

“ Oh my mother ! my dear mother, take me with you ! I am helpless, cast off, abandoned ! my father refuses to acknowledge me ; yet I thank God you are spared the consciousness of my misery. Oh had you lived to see this day, it would have been worse, far worse than death ! ”

“ My dear Miss Vincent,” cried the gentle and affectionate Gertrude Middleton, advancing, and taking her hand, “ you have one friend who will never forsake you ; compose yourself, and look for happier prospects.”

“ Alas ! ” exclaimed Caroline, bursting into an agony of tears, “ what is there left to hope for ? Look on that bed, view that pale face, see that lifeless form ; this is all that is left me of the best of mothers. I have no father—I never had one. Oh God ! I, whose

soul melted at the idea of soothing his afflictions, of wiping the tear from his interesting, his manly cheek—I, who promised myself years of filial exertion, only to be repaid by fatherly fondness and affection—even I am forbidden to see him ! I am despised, neglected, abandoned ! Ah ! where shall I seek for consolation ?”

“ Let me,” said Gertrude, kissing her cheek, “ be your consoler, your companion, your friend ; though the whole world united in disclaiming you, it would be my pride, my glory to possess your regard.”

Caroline folded the sweet girl to her bosom, and they wept in each other's arms until roused by the entrance of Wilson, who came to make necessary arrangements for the interment of the deceased. Caroline witnessed all the solemn preparations for the last office with a calm and settled despair ;—
she

she wept not; her's was a deep and silent grief, which disdained all consolation; she had lost every thing which made life valuable, and, with her mother, died every motive to exertion. She had nothing left to hope for; her lover believed her unfaithful, her father abandoned her; the grave would soon cover the remains of her only parent.— The moments passed in sad succession; time heavily stole away; Caroline heeded it not; she left not the gloomy scene until the night preceding the interment, when she was with difficulty prevailed on to take some repose in an adjoining apartment. A confused noise soon awoke her; she stole softly back; those who had been appointed watchers in the chamber of death were all asleep; use had hardened them to sights of woe; to them it brought no memento of their own

L 3

inevitable

inevitable lot ; they were callous and insensible. At the bed-side stood the figure of a man—it was her father ;—his arms were folded, his countenance was pale and dejected ; tears streamed down his cheeks ; deep and audible sobs broke from his labouring heart. Caroline retreated a few paces, and falling on her knees, uttered an involuntary ejaculation. Mr. Fitzmorris started, and precipitately quitted the room. She heard him enter, and traverse that he occupied, with hurried and agitated steps.

“ Alas ! ” thought she, “ what are his feelings at this moment ! and why cannot I fly to him, and endeavour to console him ? Oh my father ! respected and honoured appellation, I cannot, will not believe that you will cast me off ; you are too noble, too good, too generous ; you will relent ; you will not punish the innocent, the forlorn Caroline.”

Night

Night wore away, yet she gained no repose; morning returned only to bring an augmentation of misery; the final separation of soul and body had been less painful.—She took an eternal leave of the remains of her hapless mother; she wept for her own loss, while she rejoiced that she was beyond the reach of human misfortune; she marked the slow and solemn procession as it moved from the house, and felt as if now first sensible of her irreparable loss. On retiring to her own room, she flung herself on the bed, and gave vent to the anguish which oppressed her labouring heart. Gertrude Middleton sat by the bed-side, and suffered her to weep without interruption; and after a short time she gradually grew more composed. Towards evening a servant entered, and delivered her the following note:—

TO MISS VINCENT.

“ Mr. Fitzmorris is desirous of informing Miss Caroline —, that if she is disposed, and will enter into a positive engagement to retire to any secluded part, either of England or Wales, and will renounce the protection of those she is at present connected with, he will, for the sake of her affinity to the deceased Mrs. —, allow her two hundred pounds a year, and augment it as he may hereafter find, by her conduct, she merits his countenance. An immediate answer will oblige — ”

Caroline put this letter into her pocket without making any comment ; her heart was full ; she burst into tears. Gertrude pressed her hand, but spoke not.

“ My

“My dear girl,” said Caroline, “pardon me, but I wish to be alone.”

Miss Middleton, having taken an affectionate leave of her, retired. It was some time before our heroine could calm her emotions. She was now certain that her father refused to acknowledge her.

“He will not even suffer me to bear his name,” sighed she; “and his letter has none of that politeness he used to evince towards me; yet however harsh his commands are, it is my duty to obey him;”—and taking up a pen, she wrote as follows:—

TO MR. FITZMORRIS.

“Caroline —— submits her future residence to the choice of Mr. Fitzmorris.—Alone, friendless, forlorn, forsaken, what has she on earth left to wish for? Without a parent, or

at least denied the consolation of his affection and countenance, all quarters of the globe are alike indifferent to her; society has no charms; solitude no terrors to a mind like her's. Misfortune has aimed her last dart; Unkindness has pointed the arrow—it still wounds—it will continue to rankle. She is ready at any time to retire to the situation Mr. Fitzmorris shall fix on for her future abode.”

This note did not at all please her; she wrote several others, which equally failed of success; and, after some time, folded it in haste, and dispatched it. The servant soon returned with the following words, enveloping a bank note for twenty pounds.

“At six o'clock Wilson shall attend Miss Vincent to the house of Mrs. O'Sullivan, in Cornwall.”

Caroline

Caroline was pleased to reside in a house which belonged to her father.

“ I shall at least be under his protection,” cried she ; “ and who knows, he may in time relent.” Yet her heart died within her at the probability of this being a fallacious hope, and at the thoughts of quitting the family of Mr. Middleton, from which she had received such unbounded kindness.— She dared not trust herself to witness the fond regret of Gertrude, and finally resolved to conceal the intended separation.— She now began to prepare for her journey ; and having packed up her small wardrobe, she went into the sitting room to join the family of Mr. Middleton, for the first time since the death of her mother. She supported herself through the evening with a tolerable degree of composure, and bade them adieu for the night with a fortitude to which she had imagined herself unequal ;

and retiring to her chamber, she sat down to contemplate, in solitary wretchedness, her own cheerless fate.

“Alas!” sighed she, “how dreary and forlorn is my hapless destiny! A wandering and disconsolate being, without friends, without family, or even a name; driven from those whose generosity sheltered me from the hard gripe of poverty; and, motherless, obliged to seek in the society of strangers that friendship denied by those whom Nature has destined to shelter and protect me: yet I will bear it all with at least an appearance of fortitude. I will convince my unnat——” She checked herself; and sighing out the name of *father*, continued—“Yes, I will convince him I am not unworthy to bear the name of Fitzmorris; I will force him, in spite of himself, to do me justice.”

Caroline

Caroline dressed herself for her journey ; and throwing herself on the bed, fell into a composed slumber, and awoke not until summoned by Wilson to arise. She wrote a short note to Mrs. Middleton while he conveyed her boxes to the carriage ; and every thing being ready, set out with a heavy heart for the inn at which the chaise waited, which was to convey Wilson and herself from Margate. Not three paces from the house she was accosted by Major Mortimer, who, to her great wonder, expressed no surprise at seeing her out so early, and equipped for a journey : on the contrary, as if informed of her intention, he requested permission to see her in safety to the carriage.— This, however, she declined ; he then entreated to be favoured with a few moments' conversation in private.

“ Major

“Major Mortimer,” said she, “Mr. Wilson is a friend of my family ; you can have nothing to communicate to me which he is not welcome to hear.”

Wilson looked at her with an air of incredulity, the Major with mortification.

“Miss Vincent,” said he, “my business is of importance ; you well know I will be heard ; you shall not leave me until my request is complied with.”

“Excuse me, Sir,” said Wilson, interrupting him ; “my master has entrusted Miss Vincent to my care, and I will not suffer her to be molested.”

“And who the devil are you ?” asked the Major, angrily. “Fellow, know your distance !”

“I flatter myself,” returned Wilson, “that I do sufficiently know the distance between us ; and while I act only as my conscience

conscience tells me is right, I fear not you or any man."

Caroline, alarmed at the violence of rage which she saw gathering in the countenance of the Major, now took Wilson by the arm, and attempted to leave him; he followed, and catching her by the hand, exclaimed—

"I can bear your anger, your cruelty, but not your contempt. By Heavens, you shall hear, you shall pity me!"—Caroline replied not.—"Reflect on your own situation," continued he; "you are friendless, fatherless, an orphan; you are indigent, forsaken by your lover; your fame is sullied; yet, notwithstanding all these circumstances, I am ready to take you to my arms, to make you my wife. No expence shall be spared to gratify your ambition; no attention neglected to contribute to your happiness;—and no one will dare to cast any reflection on
the

the conduct of my wife ;—only promise to be mine, adored Caroline !”

She looked at him with indignation, and attempted to withdraw her hand.

“I thank God,” cried she, “I am none of all these ; I am neither friendless, fatherless, nor forsaken ; yet were I all, and reduced to the most abject, helpless state of poverty, nothing should tempt me to become your wife. I trust I shall yet live to silence the insinuations of the malevolent ; my conduct will bear their scrutiny, my actions the severest are welcome to sift into. Once I considered myself obliged by your preference, though it was then equally undesired and unmerited ; it has, from the beginning, brought me nothing but vexation. In the pursuit of my regard you have sought only selfish gratification ; you have studied your own happiness, not mine. Delicacy would

have prevented my publishing the preference you have professed for me ; but you left it not in my power to conceal it, and, equally ungenerous and unmanly, still persist in a suit which has always met with my entire and unequivocal disapprobation."

"By Heaven !" cried Major Mortimer, stamping his foot, and seizing our heroine by the arm, "this is too bad ; a man of my fortune, my family, thus to be insulted by a little chit of yesterday ; but you shall yet be mine, and beware of driving me to distraction ! Revenge will be in my power ; your minion shall feel my anger—he shall answer for all."

Caroline walked on ; the chaise was in sight. Wilson handed her in ; the Major grew outrageous ; he attempted to strike Wilson, who warded off the blow with a stick

stick which he held in his hand, and mounting the step of the carriage, the door closed, and the Major was left standing by the inn door. Caroline was soon quietly settled with Mrs. O'Sullivan, in Cornwall; and Wilson, having presented her with the first quarter's payment from his master, and having informed her she would receive the effects of the deceased, he departed to join Fitzmorris, and to wait on him to London.

During the hurry of circumstances, and the agitation this faithful servant had been in on the death of Mrs. Fitzmorris, he had forgotten a letter found in the pocket of the deceased, addressed to his master, and which, when he came to arrange and transmit her effects to her daughter, again presented itself to his view. He dreaded the emotion it might awaken in the bosom of Fitzmorris, which had so lately been visited by

new

new and bitter calamities; he feared the combination of misery he had recently encountered would again unhinge his mental faculties, yet he dared not any longer conceal it; and when his master retired to rest, he placed it on his table, and waited, in fearful expectation, the effect it might have on his mind. Fitzmorris took up the letter;—the hand was well known; his heart vibrated; his hand trembled; his Caroline seemed to speak from the grave; he pressed the lifeless memorial to his bosom; it was the last legacy of one on whom his whole soul had fondly doted. He sat down; perhaps it contained some parting request; perhaps she had bedewed it with tears of repentance and regret;—he gazed at it in speechless agony; he fancied he could trace the impress of a tear on the paper; the last scene of her existence was present to his imagination;

imagination ; he gazed fearfully on the objects around him ; in silence, in solitude, unattended and forlorn, had she breathed her last sigh.

“ Ah ! what,” cried he, “ were those feelings which hastened the agonies of death ?— What that remorse which anticipated the hour of dissolution ? What a devastation did thy Fitzmorris behold ! Oh God, it was too much !”

He burst into tears ; he recollected that, had she lived, they could never have been re-united ; that the fond partiality of the most unbounded affection could never have banished the remembrance of the past : yet the pride of offended dignity, his just resentment at injuries received, the disappointment of fond partiality, all were forgotten in contemplating the close of her existence, and he mourned for her with the same sorrow he
would

would have experienced had he lost her before her dereliction from virtue. After some moments he opened the letter, and read as follows:—

TO MR. FITZMORRIS.

“Not for myself, Fitzmorris, do I now write to you; not for myself do I petition you: the cold grave will soon shelter me from reproach, from infamy, from contempt, from the agonies of conscience. I have a daughter, a dear, an amiable, a suffering daughter; it is for her sake I now write, I now intercede. Oh Fitzmorris! she is your’s as well as mine. She is your Caroline, my Caroline; she is good, she is lovely, she is virtuous, she is innocent, she yet lives—(Oh why did I deceive you!)—lives to be the consolation and support of
your

your declining years, the happiness of your existence. She has been more than all this to me; she has been the sole ray of light which has broke in on my darkened prospects. Can it therefore be wondered at that I concealed her from you? Oh, I have need of your pardon, Fitzmorris; I have little time left for repentance; my spirit hangs even now on the verge of eternity; I deserve to suffer; I am content to resign her. Take, Oh take her from me; shield her from affliction; cherish her as the choicest gift of Heaven; acknowledge her as the pride of your family;—she is beautiful, she is gentle, she is highly endowed with every noble, every exalted sentiment;—sooth her sorrows, for she is the child of misery; from the height of happiness she has voluntarily descended to the depth of human misfortune; she has left the expecting arms of a
tenderly

tenderly esteemed lover, to be the consolation and support of a declining parent; she has lengthened my existence; she has smoothed the pillow of disease; she even now prays to be permitted to close the eye in death, to receive the last sigh: but it cannot, it must not be! Oh hasten then to bear her from me; receive to your arms and to your heart your angelic daughter! I ask you not to extend your forgiveness to me; I feel, I know it is impossible. I ask you only to receive your child, and I am confident of success; for do I not write to the noble-minded, the generous, the disinterested Fitzmorris? Let not the glory of your House be ruined; let not this lily of the vale be suffered to fade; let not the pride of human nature sink, neglected and forlorn;—in her features you may trace the resemblance of your own; she possesses every feminine grace, more than feminine fortitude, more than manly.

manly sense. Oh Fitzmorris! far worse than death is the thought of this separation—I cannot support it. Oh my full, my agonized heart! I cannot, I dare not see you; may the Almighty shield you—may he preserve and support you!—to your affection I confide my all. The bitterness of death is past. Oh Fitzmorris, adieu! Watch with more than fatherly fondness over my sweet blossom, my lily of the vale. I adjure you, by all your hopes of happiness hereafter, by the love you once felt for her hapless mother, cherish and protect my child; she must, she will be your consolation. To see her is joy unspeakable; to know her virtues, more than mortal felicity; to call her your's is glory almost beyond the desert of humanity; you are worthy of her; she alone can be deserving of you. Oh my full heart!—I cannot go on!

“CAROLINE.”

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

" A few seem favourites of Fate,

" In Pleasure's lap carefs'd ;

" But think not that the rich and great

" Are always truly blest'd.

" But Oh what crowds in every land,

" All wretched and forlorn !

" Through weary life this lesson learn,

" That man was made to mourn !"

" SHE is not then," cried Fitzmorris, rising, and putting the letter on the table, " she is not the daughter of Egerton ! Oh God ! this is too much, too much for humanity ! What a barbarian she must think

me! Oh my child! the arms of your father are open for your protection; never will he forsake you; in his heart shall your virtues be fostered—your cares shall be hushed on his bosom—you shall indeed be the pride, the support of his declining life. In the affection of my children will I seek consolation. My Frederic will yet be happy; on him will I bestow this dear, this invaluable blessing; with my daughter will I mourn the hapless fate of her mother. Yet Major Mortimer, what am I to think of him? No, she is still pure; it must, it shall be so!” and he arose, and called Wilson to share with him in this unhopèd-for joy.—Wilson now related the conversation which had passed between Caroline and the Major on the morning of her departure; and it was soon settled to proceed to London, and from thence into Cornwall,

Cornwall, that Fitzmorris might receive from Caroline herself an explanation of every thing which appeared mysterious in her conduct; they soon arranged their preparations, and, before the dawn of day, were seated in a chaise, and many miles distant from Margate. Nothing happened to retard their journey to London, from which place they reached Bristol in safety, and were set down at the Bush Inn in that city. As Fitzmorris crossed the inn yard, a man advanced towards him, and pulling off his hat, demanded if his name was not Fitzmorris. On his answering in the affirmative—

“If your Honour,” replied he, “will favour me with a hearing, I have something of importance to communicate to you.”

Mr. Fitzmorris accompanied him into a parlour, and then asked his business with him.

"Pray, Sir," said he, "are you not uncle to a gentleman of the name of Godfrey?"

"Yes," said Fitzmorris, much alarmed; "nothing has happened to him, I hope?"

"Not that I know of," returned the man; "but I have something to relate to your Worship. You must know, Sir, I have been the confidential servant of Major Mortimer."—Fitzmorris was all attention.

"You must know, Sir, my master fell in love with a young lady, to whom your nephew was going to be married; and as he could not have her himself, he was determined no one else should—something like the dog in the manger, your Honour.—Well, as I was saying, he then asks I to get acquainted with some of the people at Madam Vincent's. Lord bless her poor soul—people, did I say. 'She was poor enough;—she never kept but one poor creature, old Mary;—

Mary ;—and a crown piece did the business with her. Well, she came whenever she could get out, and told master all that was done in the house ; and one day in pettisker she came all in a hurry, and told him that Madam and Miss were going to London without telling any one of it ; so master gave her another crown, and told her what to say if any one came, and enquired after them, and then we followed them to London, and here we had the same work to do over again ;—but it happened the worse luck for me, that an old sweetheart of mine lived in the house with Miss, and what does the Major do, but he gets me to bring the young woman to him. Oh, had I but known what a limb of the devil he was !—Now Mrs. Jane was a pretty young girl, your Honour, and I hoped she would have made me a sober wife, and somehow or other

I did not much like to set her in the way of my master, for he had always a colt's tooth for a wench ;—but fate is fate, and there is no resisting fortune, as the saying is ; and it was mine, your Worship, to be ornamented on the head before I was married. But it's no use to run on with any more rigmarole ; the Major got Mrs. Jane to give your nephew a letter which settled the business at once, for the match was all over ; he promised to make poor Jenny's fortune, but, alack-a-day ! he has made another thing of her now. He sent me to his house in Wales ; and as he could not get Miss, he put up with Jenny ; and now he writes to me, your Honour, to come and marry the girl, for she is with child. But I'll father no man's child ; and when I do marry a wanton, it shall be one of my own making. I've told your
Worship

Worship all, purely out of revenge; for I'll neither pimp for the Major, nor no man."

"You were not so scrupulous, Mr. John," replied Fitzmorris, "respecting Miss Vincent; you felt no compunction for the part you acted towards her; Providence has thought fit to punish you for the wrong you intended towards her; she is preserved, but you are rendered unhappy."

"I beg your Honour's pardon," said John; "we intended no harm to Miss Vincent; the Major assured us it would be for Miss Vincent's good, and that he would marry her. I am a soldier, your Honour, and I thought I could depend on a soldier's word. Besides, he promised to make our fortunes, and it would have been a fine thing for poor people to settle, and be a little comfortable."

“ Good can never be effected by doing evil,” said Fitzmorris ; “ and had you refused, your Jenny would still have been virtuous ; however, only do that which is right in future, and you shall be no sufferer by the Major’s displeasure.”

Mr. John, making many bows, and thanking his Honour again and again, now departed ; and Fitzmorris went into the coffee-room to take his breakfast, as from thence he should witness the arrival of the Mail, and perhaps beguile away the time in some pleasant society until Wilson was ready to proceed on their journey. A basin of chocolate, a hot roll, and a newspaper were soon procured. Fitzmorris was, however, too much occupied by his own thoughts to peruse the one, or do any great execution on the other ; and after a short interval, he entered into conversation with

two

two very elegant young men in the next box to him. The similarity of their features convinced him they were brothers; their accent bespoke them Irish, and their appearance denoted that they were severe sufferers from the commotions of their country. There was something in their countenances which interested him in their favour, and he almost fancied he had before met with them; yet he could not recal to his mind any recollection of either time or place. Their conversation, at once spirited and refined, increased his prepossession in their favour, and he regretted that his stay in Bristol would be too short to cultivate an acquaintance with them. They informed him they were going to join a corps of Yeomanry, to which they belonged, and from which some singular circumstances had separated them."

“ You will go from hence in the Mail ?”
said Fitzmorris, in a tone of enquiry.

After some hesitation, one of them answered, that unfortunately their pecuniary circumstances admitted not of a choice, as they were obliged to chuse the least expensive mode of travelling. Fitzmorris wished to offer them assistance, but delicacy withheld him. There was an air of dignity in their appearance which checked the wish ere it was half formed ; and before he could frame any plan for their accommodation, his attention was called off by the entrance of Wilson, who exclaimed—

“ The Mail has come in, and who do you think it has brought us, my dear master ?”

“ I was so much engaged in conversation with these gentlemen,” replied Fitzmorris,

“ that

“ that I did not even notice its arrival ;— pray whom did it contain ? ”

“ They are all come ! ” answered the steward ; “ Mr. and Mrs. Edwin, my young master, and all ! ”

Fitzmorris now hastened to welcome these dear relatives, and for some time was lost in the unexpected happiness he experienced.— Mr. Edwin looked almost as well as ever ; Emma was in high spirits ; Clara appeared, at least, serene, and Mrs. Dixon composed ; but poor Frederic exhibited a countenance full of dejection, and appeared in a state of health which gave his fond uncle the greatest concern.

“ My dear boy,” cried he, shaking his head, “ how is all this ? How is it that in my Frederic’s I behold the only face which brightens not at my approach ? Come,

come, all will yet be well; you must not darken the happiness of your friends."

Frederic sighed deeply; he affected to smile, but the effort succeeded not. Mrs. Edwin, wishing to call away the attention of the company from him, now said—

"You see, my dear uncle, your truant niece is returned; I have brought back my rambler and my rival together: but," continued she, patting Clara upon the cheek, "she is a good girl, and we will tell no tales; and here is poor Mrs. Dixon quite unhappy, that you have none of your former gallantry to bestow on her."

"My good cousin," said Fitzmorris, "will excuse me; she knows how much I rejoice to see her well and happy. And here," continued he, approaching Clara, "is another I felicitate on her arrival in England;

we are all, you know, connected ;” and he kissed her cheek.

“ Mightily well !” cried Mrs. Dixon ;—
“ and pray, Mr. Fitzmorris, if it be not impertinent, where are you going ?”

“ I am going into Cornwall,” replied he ;
“ and, what will surprise you all, I am going to the house of Mrs. O’Sullivan, to meet my daughter !”—Every countenance now exhibited marks of astonishment.—“ Yes,” continued he, “ I am going to meet my Caroline, whom I have so long believed no more !”—He sighed deeply.—“ My wife is dead ; and this event revealed to me the blessing which Providence had yet in store for me ; but hereafter you shall know all.”

“ Then we will all steer our course to the same place,” said Mr. Edwin ; “ Powercourt is large enough to contain us.”

Fitzmorris acceded to this proposal.

“ It

“It will detain me only one day,” said he, mentally, “and that detention will be amply repaid by those I shall bring with me.”

The person of Clara now reminded him of the two young men he had seen in the coffee-room.

“They may,” thought he, “be the brothers she laments;” and he retired in search of them. He enquired their names; they were strangers—no one was acquainted with them; he left his compliments, and desired to see them ere they quitted Bristol.—“Tell them,” said he, “I have business of consequence with them, and shall esteem myself particularly unfortunate, if not permitted to see them.”

On his return to the apartment where he had left his company, he found no one remaining in it but Mrs. Dixon, to whom he related

related every thing that had happened since he last saw her, and concluded with saying—

“ I know not how, in the present weak and languid state of my nephew, to break to him the news of the vast tide of happiness which is his.”

“ Leave that to chance,” said Mrs. Dixon ; “ he will soon recover the effects of this joyful surprise. Now I should like to witness the meeting ; and as I know his anxiety will so soon end, pardon me if I amuse myself a little with his distress.”

Frederic now entered.

“ Mr. Godfrey,” said she, “ I have something to communicate to you.”

“ I am almost afraid of you,” replied he ; “ you are so fond of exercising your talent at tormenting.”

“ I have received,” said she, “ from your uncle a confirmation of the unworthiness of
Miss

Miss Vincent.”—(Frederic here gave a deep sigh.)

“ And since you can never, for a moment, entertain any hopes of uniting your fate with her's, he wishes you to endeavour to transfer the affection you once felt for her to his daughter. Your Caroline is lost to you for ever—his Caroline is every way worthy of your regard ; she is young, beautiful, virtuous, nobly descended ; can you then refuse to gladden the heart of the generous Fitzmorris ? Will you not contribute to brighten the remnant of his days, which have, till now, been uniformly marked with misfortune ? ”

Frederic interrupted her, saying, “ I would, my dear Madam, do every thing possible to make him happy ; I would, with pleasure, resign my existence to contribute to the felicity of his ; but this I can never comply with ; I can never bestow that affection
on

on another, once devoted to Caroline Vincent : and were I to marry Miss Fitzmorris, even in her arms I should regret the loss of my own Caroline. No, death alone can banish her from my mind ; with her, life would have been a continued scene of felicity ; her society would have constituted a terrestrial paradise, but as it is, my heart must ever remain a stranger to love ; and if I can only recover my serenity, I shall have sufficient reason to be grateful to Providence."

"I have," cried Mrs. Dixon, much moved, "like yourself, felt the energy of passion—like you, have found the fallaciousness of hope—like you, have experienced the pangs of disappointment ;—yet my youth has not been wasted in vain regret ; and though sorrow has untimely despoiled the roses from my cheeks, it has not anticipated the
the

the effects of old age ; no, affection, however laudable in itself, cannot be permitted to rise to excess without a crime. Believe me you were born for higher pursuits ; many talents are entrusted to you ; Oh cast them not away ; hear my story, and judge how much reason you have to rejoice. Reflect on the blessings still lent to you, and cease to repine."

She then began as follows :—

" My father, and the mother of Mr. Fitzmorris, were brother and sister ; the name of my family is O'Niel ; they boast of being descended from the great Irish Chieftain of that name : my father had one brother, whom I never saw, in consequence of a disagreement many years before I was born. The mansion of my forefathers was the region of romance ; it was situated on the summit of a mountain, on the sea shore, about

about ten miles from Dublin. Behind it were groves and woodlands, which descended in a gradual slope into a valley, not less remarkable for its beauty and verdure, than its extent. A delightful river rolled in front of the Castle of O'Niel, whose waters filled the surrounding moat ; and a cascade falling on one side, gave grandeur and sublimity to the whole scene. I was the only child of my father ; my mother died before I could feel her loss : but she was severely mourned by my surviving parent ; and, for her sake, within his own domain he secluded himself from the rest of the world ; he was a good master, a good landlord, and an affectionate father ; yet some peculiarities in his temper rendered him a very improper person to have the care of a young girl of lively temper and strong passions. He was accustomed to reign with despotic authority among his
own

own vassals and dependants ; and having scarcely any connection with mankind, except in the Fitzmorris family, he had consequently no competitor ;—his will was law ; his opinion dictated to all around him ; and except his daughter, no one dared to contradict him ; he was generous ; and, could his feelings once be touched, he might be led any way. He fixed on an old lady for my instructress, who was the most unfit person in the world for such a charge ; for besides that she was naturally of a romantic turn, she had been crossed in love, and this circumstance gave a *sombre* tint to her whole character ; in religion she was an enthusiast. Who then can wonder that I imbibed those qualities ? Who can wonder that, though naturally vivacious, I longed for the time when I should experience all those delightful sensations I had so often heard her describe ?

describe? Who can wonder that I longed to behold an object, on whom to place my whole heart, a kindred mind, a congenial soul, who should feel for me all the energies of passion, whose converse should embellish the most gloomy scenes, whose society should give an additional charm to the most animated; whose person should resemble the description Mrs. O'Connor had so often given me of her departed Archibald? And who can wonder that the first handsome youth I beheld, should appear to my ardent imagination more than all these?—I was denied all society but that of my father, Mrs. O'Connor, and a young lady, a relation of her's, a Miss Sedly. In the latter I possessed a sincere, sensible, and ingenuous friend; for though several years younger than myself, her commerce with mankind had secured her from those prejudices a young person

person in my situation is so apt to imbibe ; and I doubt not but that it would have been very advantageous to me to have continued the acquaintance :—but her father went to reside in England, and I saw her no more until long after she had become Lady Clayton.—My mind was well stored with every knowledge to be acquired by books ; my person accomplished and, I have been since informed, beautiful. My spirits, notwithstanding the uniformity of my life, were vivacious ; and my manners, in spite of the rustics with which I was surrounded, possessed a native dignity, which not unfrequently bordered on *hauteur*. I rose with the lark ; I bounded over the mountains ; I seated myself amidst the most romantic scenery ; I wrote sonnets ; I composed verses ; I set my own poetry to music ; I was certainly rather an extraordinary woman ;
for

for though feminine in my manners, I gave into every masculine amusement : I hunted, fished, and sometimes went a shooting with my father ; and though proud by nature, and rendered more so by education, I danced on the green sward with the villagers and tenantry.—I was mistress of my father's house, his purse, his heart ; no one went away from the Castle of O'Niel with a sorrowful heart ; I visited the sick, I instructed the young, I supported the aged. When (not unfrequently) we grew languid from solitude and seclusion, the versatility of my imagination invented new sources of amusement and festivity.—My heart knew no guile ; my bosom was the seat of happiness, and the elasticity of my spirits produced constant motion and activity.—My father was the quintessence of loyalty, and a great stickler for family and descent. I myself inherited from him this
pride

pride of ancestry, and wished that my cousin Fitzmorris might be amiable, and desire to ally himself to me.

‘Then,’ cried I, enraptured at the idea, ‘both equally rich, both of ancient and honourable descent, we shall concentrate in one point the separate and divided branches of our families!’

“When I had seen this cousin, when I had once beheld this Fitzmorris, how fervently did my heart join in this wish to attract his attention! You, my friend, who never beheld him in his youth, can form no idea of his manly beauty; you who have never beheld the structure until defaced by time and misfortune, you can scarcely imagine what it once was: yet the ruin is still noble; the outworks are indeed divested of their original splendour, but the interior is still the same—if possible, more grand, more dignified,

dignified, more sublime. I first beheld him, unconscious who he was, at a masquerade in Dublin Castle, to which I had, with great difficulty, persuaded my father to let me go. A few weeks after Mr. Fitzmorris made us his annual visit, accompanied by his son and daughter. My heart was no longer my own ; it was subdued at once by this fascinating cousin. At first I experienced none of the anxieties attendant on the passion of love, for I construed the polite attention he paid me into the ebullitions of tenderness ; and while he viewed me with perfect composure and indifference, my whole frame trembled at his approach.— Overwhelmed in rapture at his presence, I thought not of futurity, and, in his absence, recollected all that had passed at our last meeting. I retraced his features, dwelt with energy on his virtues, recollected his most

trifling conversation ; imagination heightened his attractions ; fond partiality overlooked his insensibility. The time of his departure at length arrived. Mr. Fitzmorris returned to Dublin with his children ; I regretted the absence of young Fitzmorris, but comforted myself with thinking it would be of short continuance.

‘Helen,’ said my father, as we sat together the day of their departure, after dinner, ‘what is your opinion of your cousin ?’—I coloured.—‘Suppose,’ continued he, ‘he should take a fancy to my little girl.’

‘I think,’ replied I, ‘that is, I believe my——I suppose——’

‘Enough, my child,’ said he, smiling, and the conversation ended.

“About a fortnight after he entered my room, his whole frame trembling from the violence

violence of contending passions, with an open letter in his hand. He threw himself at my feet ; he besought me, if I had the slightest regard for him, to promise to act as he should prescribe to me. I obeyed ; he made me swear, solemnly swear, never to ally myself to young Fitzmorris.

‘ His father,’ cried he, stamping on the ground, ‘ hates, despises, scorns the heiress of O’Niel ; he informs me here,’ continued he, flinging me the letter, ‘ he has other views for his son ; and may I finally perish if I ever again hold any intercourse with him or his family !’

“ Oh what were my feelings, what my bitter agonies ! My lacerated heart felt as if rending asunder. What a horrid promise had been extorted from me ! yet I wept not ; I could not weep ; a sort of wild anguish took possession of my mind ; my bosom was the seat of comfortless despair ;

I imagined Fitzmorris as unhappy as myself, and regretted his infelicity yet more than my own. The chimerical idea I indulged of his partiality for me was soon, however, banished by the information I received of his union with another. Feminine pride prevented my feeling this acutely ;—resentment gave me resolution ; I struggled to subdue my feelings, and was ultimately successful. I reflected that had he not disposed of his affections, an indissoluble bar was placed between us ; and had generosity enough to rejoice that he felt not, like me, a disappointment in his tenderest hopes.—After some time I recovered my serenity, resumed my usual occupations, and forgot the mortification I had received ;—not so my father ; he could never bear to hear the name of Fitzmorris, and constantly importuned me to alter my condition. Many gentlemen

gentlemen of fortune proposed themselves, but my heart was a stranger to love. Family pride, however, at length got the better of my repugnance, and a circumstance happened at this time which determined my choice. A gentleman of the name of Dixon came to reside in our neighbourhood; his worth was well known, his poverty the general subject of conversation. He was descended from a noble family, and had been visited by singular misfortunes. Since Mr. Fitzmorris had refused to ally his son to me, my father had permitted me to mix more with the world. I became acquainted with Mr. Dixon;—he loved me;—he never told me so, but a certain intuitive knowledge convinced me of it.

‘ Ah !’ cried I, mentally, ‘ what felicity to raise from indigence a man of sensibility and feeling—to rescue from the gripe of poverty

a noble and ingenuous mind ! I shall secure to myself his everlasting gratitude, his fondest love ; I shall fulfil the only, the last wish of my beloved father.'

"It was decided ;—I became a wife—a mother—Respected, honoured, endearing appellation ! I have never experienced a mother's transports ; my father died ; and in consequence of the grief I felt for his loss, I was incapacitated from performing the tender offices of maternal fondness ;—my children were sent to nurse ;—they were stolen from me ;—I saw them no more ! Ah ! what were the pangs of my first disappointment, compared to this stroke ! Oh ye days of anguish, severe and numberless—Oh nights of horror, years of misery ! I have felt until almost too enervated to feel ; I have wept until the fountain of tears has been almost dried up. My husband was the kindest,

kindest, best of human beings; he participated in my pleasure, he bewailed in my affliction; he instructed me to hope; he suppressed his own feelings in compassion to mine, and fell, ultimately fell a victim to restrained sorrow—he died of a broken heart! After the death of my father, the family estate was claimed by my uncle;—and, being still in possession of a handsome fortune in right of my mother, I contentedly resigned it; and, on the death of my husband, hastened to this country, where I have resided ever since, in total ignorance of the fate of my children;—if they survive, the death of my uncle has restored to them the seat of their forefathers.—Oh God! what an idea! I pray to—I trust in the Almighty, and am resigned to his will; yet years have not rendered me callous to the recollection

of the past. I strive to banish thought—
for thought is agony !”

Overpowered by her emotion, Mrs. Dixon now rose, and precipitately quitted the room, and Frederic retired to dress for dinner.

CHAP. VII.

- “ The maze of life sometimes looks dark and wild,
“ And oft, when hopes are brightest, we’re beguil’d ;
“ Oft when we stand on brinks of dark despair,
“ Some happy turn with joy dispels our care.”

THE company were all assembled but Fitzmorris, waiting the appearance of dinner. He entered, introducing the strangers
he

he had met with in the morning. Clara was seated with her back towards them;—the voice of one of the gentlemen reached her ear; she turned, started from her seat, and was in an instant encircled in the arms of both her brothers.

“My sweet Clara!—My dear Lionel! my kind James!” was all they could utter. How long they would have remained in this ecstasy is uncertain. They were, however, roused from it by a loud shriek from Emma, and turning, they beheld Mrs. Dixon senseless on the ground. Every one eagerly assisted in recovering her, and, after some time, she revived.

“Oh that face,” cried she, gazing earnestly at Lionel O’Niel, “that voice, that name!”—He looked at her with astonishment; her whole frame trembled convulsively.—“Have you not,” cried she, with eagerness,

eagerness, "have you not a scar on your right arm?"

He answered in the affirmative. She clasped him round the neck, and catching hold of the arm of James, exclaimed—

"Then you are mine, both mine! Lionel and James!—Oh merciful God, how miraculous are thy ways!—Yes, ye are both mine—my children so long lost, so fondly beloved, so vainly fought—ye are worthy of the race from whence ye sprung."

Every one participated in the happiness of those so dear to them, every one congratulated the brothers on this discovery, and every one was anxious to hear from Mrs. Dixon an account of the incidents of her past life. She related, in a few words, all that she had that morning revealed to Frederick, except what concerned Fitzmorris; and having concluded, called on her sons
for

for the continuation of their history after the time they left Clara. Dinner, however, prevented their compliance with this request; but the servants were no sooner withdrawn, than Lionel Dixon began as follows :—

“ Our history is short, and has in it little worthy of notice. After the departure of Clara, I was seized, and taken back to the Castle of O’Niel, and confined with my brother in one of the dungeons belonging to it. Here we remained more than three weeks, deprived of every comfort, and most of the necessaries of life, a few cold potatoes and a little coarse bread being all the sustenance which was bestowed on us. At the end of that time we were conveyed to one of the rebel commanders, who was a Frenchman; and on our refusing to join in the destruction of our country, we were shipped on board a small fishing smack, and
N 6 conveyed

conveyed to the port of Genoa. Here we were again confined in company with thousands of unhappy people, whose only crime was resistance to the enslavers of their country. All the prisoners, taken by the French in their battles with the Genoese were driven in herds, like cattle to a market, and at this place sold to the Spaniards, and by them conveyed to their American colonies, to work in the mines. Oh what were our sensations when convinced of the destination assigned us—what the bitterness of heart with which we cursed our undoers !

‘ Alas ! ’ cried James, ‘ we are for ever deprived of the sight of all tender relations ; we shall never behold our native country.— This is the philanthropy of French philosophy ; this then is their boasted liberty, this is equality. Alas ! while the African is unshackled, the European is enslaved ! Oh how

how severely have all those who trusted in their fidelity been punished for their temerity ! How dreadful have been the ravages which have followed their steps ! I thank God my sister is safe ; and happy was my father to be released from a state far worse than death.'

" We were stowed, with five hundred Genoese, in a small vessel which would scarcely contain us. Our provisions were insufficient, and of an inferior quality ; and famine promised to reduce our numbers long before the conclusion of the voyage.— Dreadful was the thought of death in the midst of all these horrors, yet more dreadful the fear of being left a solitary survivor to encounter the shackles of slavery, and the scourge of oppression, alone and without support. How often did we look back on our native country, now doubly endeared from the thoughts of beholding it no more—

how

how did every succeeding day give fresh anguish to our hearts ! The knowledge of having thousands of miserable wretches to share in our calamities only rendered them the more dreadful and severe. A vessel hove in sight ; it bore the colours of England. How our hearts were agitated by hope and despair as we alternately thought that it would or would not conquer ! It entered the heads of some of the infernal crew, in whose power we were, to massacre us all ! The Almighty, however, saved us almost miraculously ; for on the instant this plan was to have been put in execution, we were boarded. Oh how the shouts of conquest from the English delighted our souls ! The Genoese were enraptured ; my brother James shed tears of joy at this un hoped-for happiness ; and I, in the fulness of transport, sang my country's song of ' Croppies lay down.' We were
landed

landed at Sheerness, and have proceeded thus far in our way home, when Fortune gave us the unexpected pleasure of finding the heiress of O'Niel and my sister together.— We have lost the one,” continued he, glancing his eye at Clara, “ but how amply has it been compensated by the restoration of a parent ! And here, my dear Madam,” said he, taking a paper from his bosom, “ is a parcel, which I have preserved in security amid all the vicissitudes of fortune. It was confided to me by my uncle during the capture of the Castle of O'Niel.”

It was directed to Mrs. Dixon. She opened it, and read as follows :—

“ Helen O'Niel, I know you not ; Helen O'Niel, I yet hate you ; when my brother died, I stole from you Lionel and James,
your

your two sons. I wished to secure to myself the castle of my forefathers ; I purposed to ally Lionel to my daughter, and by that means ensure it to her. Death will, I fear, prevent ; but my soul will not rest unless to you I speak my wish. I will incessantly haunt you if it be not complied with.—The castle is taken—my child is safe ; your's are encompassed with difficulties, dangers, and death ; if they survive, you will receive this. I shall live only a few moments longer.—They come, they come ! Oh death ! thou art bitter even to the soul of the brave ;—I have faced thee in battle without dread ; yet, in the hour of retirement, the soul shudders at its precipitated approach ; I am cut off in the full enjoyment of health, with faculties unimpaired—it is too late—time is precious—the castle is taken—my hour is come !

“O'NIEL.”

Secluded

Secluded from the world, in a remote and solitary part of the county of Cornwall, a prey to anguish and regret for the loss of one parent, and experiencing the deepest sorrow for the supposed unkindness of the other, the life of our heroine passed without pleasure, and almost without hope. A cheerless succession of incidents, a joyless state of languor and uniformity, of mental torpor and imbecility, took possession of her faculties. Though constantly occupied, she was uninterested in the employments she engaged in; her spirits became languid and enervated; her health declined, and she appeared gradually hastening to that 'bourne from which no traveller returns.' She was herself conscious of the alteration in her spirits, and the universal debility of her whole frame; and, with meek submission, bowed before the chastening arm of the Omnipotent:

Omnipotent: her prospects were overshadowed in this life, she feared, for ever; but there was a world beyond the grave, and to that world she endeavoured, as much as possible, to turn her thoughts. A fortnight had passed—two long weeks since the commencement of her retirement, unmarked by any occurrence.—Mrs. O'Sullivan passed the greatest part of her time in her own apartment; and having in her youth given up to the vices and follies of the world, and being at length convinced of her own errors, she sickened at the reflection of the past, and meeting with some religious enthusiasts in her neighbourhood, became a new character, and a constant frequenter of the conventicle in the village. The former laxity of her principles was converted into an austere and unbending reserve; she thought every innocent relaxation criminal, and became, in the

the language of her sect, a *Gospel proselyte*, a *perfect saint*. In a situation like this, the income allowed Caroline by her father was liberal.

“It is more,” cried she, “than I can ever want ;” and having laid by twenty pounds for casual occurrences, she determined to employ the remaining thirty in the relief of the distressed. She spent the greatest part of her time in the fields, and on the sea shore, in visiting the sick and aged, in “making the widow’s heart sing for joy ;” and while she mourned incessantly her own hapless destiny, she felt, with added sympathy, for the afflictions of others. Often would she bend her steps to the birth-place of her beloved Frederic, and spend whole hours in traversing the paths he had so often trod before her. She would seat herself in the grotto he had so often reclined in, and which, in
former

former happy days, had been the subject of their conversation. Here she would retrace his features, recollect his sentiments, dwell with energy on his virtues, and at length retire in added misery at the reflection that they were all lost to her for ever ; for in all human probability she should never behold him more. She had not, in this desolate seclusion, one friend to whom she could unbosom herself ; every feminine grace, every mental accomplishment, was alike neglected. She had no longer any motive for their exertion ; she had no kind friend to amuse, no tender lover to admire, no fond mother to cheer ; and her heart, dead to every pleasurable emotion, experienced only the remembrance of past happiness as an added arrow in the quiver of misfortune. Past joy gave a poignancy to present misery ; the world, its transient and evanescent glories, faded from

from her view ; her heart sickened : how much more transient had been her happiness—
‘ it ceased to be ere you could say it was.’

As she sat one evening amusing herself, if that could be called amusement which caused tears of anguish to stream down her pallid face, the sound of a carriage startled her ; it was something so unusual, that it attracted the attention even of Mrs. O’Sullivan. They both rose, and approached the window ; the darkness prevented them from discovering any thing distinctly. Caroline trembled without knowing why ; the sound came nearer ; the carriage entered the court gate—it drove up to the door ;—a person alighted from it ; she heard the voice of her father—he rushed into the room.

“ Oh my child, my injured child,” cried he, catching her in his arms, “ my dear, my own Caroline, forgive me !”

Caroline

Caroline fell senseless into his arms.—His caresses, and the timely exertions of Mrs. O'Sullivan, recalled her fleeting senses.—What a vast world of happiness was here prepared for her !

“ My father !” cried she, “ my dear father, will you indeed acknowledge your poor Caroline ?”

“ Acknowledge you, my darling !” exclaimed Fitzmorris, rapturously ; “ yes, my heart's treasure, it is my pride, my glory to acknowledge you. Oh Caroline, what a barbarian you must think me ! But if the most fond parental tenderness can make you any reparation——”

“ Ah ! can you doubt,” cried Caroline, tenderly, “ the happiness your love will bestow on me ? Let me be only certain of its continuance.”

“My love,” said Fitzmorris, “mine is the felicity in this restoration. Oh what joy, what consolation to my old age ! I, Caroline, who thought myself forlorn, who promised myself years of sorrowful recollection, who had lost every near connection, who had beheld the happiness of my beloved nephew, as I thought, blasted for ever—ah ! my child, I loved you even when I thought you the child of my most dreadful adversary.”

He then related his conviction of the death of his own daughter, and his consequent belief that she was the child of Eger-ton, and shewed her the letter of her departed mother, which had at once convinced him of his error. They mourned together her untimely fate ; and Caroline for the first time, reclined on the bosom of her father, forgot she had ever been unhappy—forgot
even

even the subject of her thoughts when he arrived.

“ Caroline,” said Fitzmorris, taking up a drawing from the table, and smiling as he observed for whom it had been designed, “ I will give this paper to Frederic.”

“ Not for worlds,” cried Caroline, hastily, and taking out her handkerchief to hide her blushes.

“ It is a good likeness, however,” said Fitzmorris; and he put the paper in his pocket, and retired for the night.

Caroline could not sleep; joy had too much overpowered her faculties; the variety of thoughts which floated in her brain prevented even the idea of repose. She sat down, and reviewed the wonderful alteration which a few hours had made in her situation. The clouds, which had heretofore enveloped her destiny, were now dispersing, and her
mind

mind anticipated, with anxiety, the happy meeting, which she had no doubt would soon arrive, between herself and Frederic.—Morning broke in on her contemplations, and she threw herself on the bed, and soon fell into a composed slumber, from which she was awoke by the maid's announcing breakfast, and telling her that Mr. Fitzmorris had been up some hours, and waited for her. In a few minutes she was ready to attend him;—he met her on the stairs; he expressed great concern at beholding her pallid countenance.

“ I fear,” said he, “ my sweet girl has been a severe sufferer from my unnatural neglect. Oh had I but known half the graces, the virtues of my Caroline, I would have rejoiced to bestow her on my nephew, even had I known her to be Egerton's daughter !”

Caroline's eyes glistened; she pressed his hand to her lips.

"Oh my father," cried she, "how good, how kind you are! Can I fail to be well and happy when I am so blessed?"

Fitzmorris led her into the breakfast room; a gentleman sat with his back towards them. Caroline trembled; she could not be mistaken—it was Frederic himself. As his uncle introduced her to him, his eyes were bent on the ground, as if they feared to encounter those of the daughter of Fitzmorris. Caroline hoped he was well;—he started, cast his eyes on her face, and fell at her feet, exclaiming—

"Can it be possible, can it be possible? Am I indeed so blessed? Caroline Vincent, my own Caroline, are you indeed the daughter of my uncle? Do you still love me?"

me? Are you innocent?"—Fitzmorris quitted the room.—"Oh Caroline!" continued he, "trifle not with my feelings; you know not what I have endured since we last parted. Tell me you are innocent, tell me you are still virtuous; yet tell me not that you love another."—Caroline could not speak;—she held out her hand to him—he pressed it to his lips.—"Caroline," cried he, "I feel, I acknowledge your power over me; be merciful; abuse it not;—what is life without you—what the whole world in comparison of your love?"

"I am indeed," answered Caroline, "the daughter of Fitzmorris—I am virtuous—I still love you."

"And will you then at last," cried he, "reveal to me why you so strangely left me at the moment you were to have been mine for ever?"

“ I have no longer,” replied Caroline,
“ a motive for concealment.”

He caught her in his arms—he pressed her to his bosom. Words were at that moment denied him ; but the big tear of rapture, which stole down his manly cheek, spoke more eloquently than words !

THE CONCLUSION.

MR. FITZMORRIS and his family returned to Ireland, and, on his own estate, he now performs every duty of active benevolence. After so many years of infelicity, he now finds, in the society of his children, the most unmixed happiness. Caroline's attention to him is unremitting. In her society his old age steals on; and when at last he shall be taken from this mortal sphere, his eyes will peacefully close in the arms of his affectionate daughter.

“ Clara

“ Clara O’Niel,” said James Dixon, “ I cannot bear to leave England to join my corps—I cannot bear to leave you ; I am miserable whenever absent ; your society alone is the charm which can sweeten life !”

“ Leave me not then,” cried the gentle Clara, offering him her hand ; “ this is your’s—I will go with you.”

Lionel Dixon changed his name to take possession of the O’Niel estate, yet contaminated the ancient blood of his House by marrying an obscure citizen’s daughter, the daughter of Alderman Middleton, grocer and tea-dealer, Fleet Street. And what is amazing, this degradation produced no displeasure in his family, for his mother resided with them.

Major Mortimer, disappointed in his hopes of Caroline, was persuaded by Mrs. Jenny to commence Benedict ; and the week

week after that event Mrs. Jane made him the happy father of a very promising boy ;— but soon after meeting with her former friend and admirer, Mr. John, she quitted the arms of her husband, whose constant suspicions rendered her miserable, and repaired with her lover, and the few valuables she could collect, to a port in Wales. They shipped themselves for America, where they live in a state of *liberty* and *natural equality*, which they appear to *dignify* by their virtues ; and John is not without hopes of one day serving his country by becoming a *Member of the Congress* !

Mrs. Dixon returned to her native country, and the Castle of O'Niel shines with its pristine splendour.

Frederic and his Caroline, in the society of each other, possess more than mortal felicity. The past misfortunes of their lives

6 have,

have, in a great measure, checked the impetuosity of youth, and they look, with thankfulness, up to the Divine Disposer of events for the mercies they enjoy; and though the uncertainty of these will sometimes cause a sigh, yet it is speedily chased by the recollection that there is a possession beyond this world, whose tenure will be everlasting!

FINIS.

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